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# WASHINGTON,

## OUTSIDE AND INSIDE.

A PICTURE AND A NARRATIVE  
 OF THE  
 ORIGIN, GROWTH, EXCELLENCES, ABUSES, BEAUTIES, AND  
 PERSONAGES  
 OF  
 OUR GOVERNING CITY.

By GEO. ALFRED TOWNSEND, "GATH,"

AUTHOR OF "THE NEW WORLD COMPARED WITH THE OLD," AND WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT  
 OF THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE.

V. 1

"We do not know of any American newspaper-English which we like better, as English, than that of Mr. Geo. Alfred Townsend. It is a mixture of the best of Mr. Townsend's services at the Capital, where he has distinguished himself as a writer of shrewd and friendly to all those measures of political reform to which the better portion of the public are irreconcilably committed. It is, to be sure, sometimes easier to be amused by Mr. Townsend's personages, than to agree with him; but there is a humor and picturesqueness about them which is nothing less than poetical."—New York Nation.

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This book is inscribed to

EDWARD COWLES, ESQ.,

Editor of the Cleveland Leader, who took the first  
letters I wrote on politics and occurrences from the City of  
Washington in the year 1868, and who has  
always been to me a considerate  
and thoughtful friend.



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## INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

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THE public mind is at last exercised on the subject of scheming and jobbery.

The Credit Mobilier investigation accomplished what many years of unthanked agitation and challenge failed to do. It reached such eminent reputations and made such general wreck of political prospects and accomplishments, that every class of citizens—even those who came to scoff, remained beside their Capitol to pray. This was the first element of encouragement; for it proved that in every extremity of the American nation there is still a public sentiment to be found, and it will rally on the side of good morals and the reputation of the state if it understands the necessity.

The people must not be blamed if, in the great variety of affairs and investigations, they often look on confused and apathetic. Our government is so extensive in area and so diversified in operations, that it requires men of state—statesmen—to keep its machinery in order and prevent waste, neglect, interference, and incendiarism. No amount of mere honesty and good negative inclination can keep the ship of state headed well to the wind. A reasonable experience in civil affairs, education, and executive capacity are requisite, and it is when the accidents of war and the extremities of political parties bring men without these qualities to the surface that the enemy of public order and well regulated government seeks and finds his opportunity.

Such is our present condition. It is to our noble system of schools and our unhampered social civilization that we owe the moderate capacity, even of men of accident, for public affairs.







From the time of President Fillmore, all our Chief Magistrates have been of this popular growth. Mr. Lincoln proved to be the possessor of powers extraordinary in their combination, ranging from the Jesuitry of the frivolous to the depth and gravity of the heroic, and, at last, the tragic. He kept in view great objects of human performance, and showed how profoundly his inherited idea of the equality of rights and his belief in the destiny of America to protect and teach them, animated his conduct. He bore the sword of the country while constantly possessed of the ambition to preserve its nationality and expel slavery; his amiable nature added to these achievements the softness and sweetness of a personal mission, and his lofty fate the solemnity of a personal martyrdom.

The elements of corruption, inseparable from human nature, had long existed in a more or less organized form in the United States, and they waxed in strength and took enormous proportions during Mr. Lincoln's administration. He was a statesman and kept his mind steadily upon the larger objects, preferring to leave the correction of incidental evils to the administrators who should succeed the war. Had he been of a desponding spirit, and nervous and violent upon errors of omission and commission by the way, we might never have kept in view the main purposes of the war, but would have been demoralized by the ten thousand peculations and intrigues which marked the course of that extraordinary conflict.

It is our province and the task of statesmanship in our time, to return along the course of those war-ridden years and take up their civil grievances, exhibit them clearly and correct them unflinchingly. If we do not do so the Union is too great for us and emancipation has been a mockery.

The opportunities for gain at the public and general expense, had been too vast during the war to be suddenly relinquished at the peace. President Johnson was as honest personally as President Lincoln, but the division of arms was now succeeded by a conflict of policy in which the harpies who had studied the government to take advantage of it plied between both sides,



and by the common weakness of the administration and Congress continued their work. They set up the audacious proposition that the schemes which prevailed in the war and the grade of taxation consequent upon it were the declared national policy. A large proportion of the capital and enterprise of the country took the same ground. The currency was maintained in its expanded amount, and war was even declared upon gold, the standard of valuation throughout civilization. High prices and high wages were advocated as evidences of national happiness, and, of course, high salaries were demanded to make public and private conditions consistent with each other. The prevalence of money, work, and rank during the war were not suffered to relax, and congress undertook to supply artificial means of prosperity by laying out schemes, subsidizing and endowing corporations, increasing offices and commissions, and altering the tariff and the tax list. The victorious side in the wrangle about policy was soon represented in congress by a great number of adventurers, foreigners in the constituency they affected to represent, and shameless and unknown.

At this period the third President of the new era was elected, a brave and victorious soldier, who was in part a pupil and associate of the loose notions of the period. He had a modest person, and this, with his historic exploits, affected the sensibilities of his countrymen, including many of the larger men in literature, criticism, and society, so that this personal sympathy, added to the financial necessities of the time, and the well organized Northern sentiment of the majority of the people carried him again into the White House. Whatever might have been the capacity or incapacity of General Grant to direct the law makers and give example to the laws, he sank into a relatively inconspicuous place almost at the moment of his second inauguration by the nearly simultaneous exposure of a series of old and new corruptions in congress which involved the Vice-President of the United States, the Chairman of the three leading committees of Congress, the head of the Protec-





tion School in public life, half a dozen senators and as many members of the House, of both parties.

The Vice-President departing and the new Vice-President acceding, both complicated in the celebrated Credit Mobilier corruption, confronted the public gaze as actors in the same ceremonial with President Grant, who was waiting to deliver his second inaugural address to the public. Five senators, Bogy, Casserly, Clayton, Caldwell, and Pomeroy, were at that moment under accusation of purchasing their seats in the Senate. Three judges of the United States Courts, Delahay, Sherman, and Durrell, were under impeachment or imputation for complicity in the Credit Mobilier intrigue. The proudest foreheads in the national legislature were abashed. It was a melancholy and disgraceful spectacle, and it saddened the capital and cast a cloud over all the country.

The purpose of this book is to make Washington at the present day visible to voters, so that they can be guided in criticism upon abuses such as have been related. The course of the chapters is purposely made discursive so that the mind can be carried through a variety of scenes without flagging.





## CHAPTER II.

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### HOW WASHINGTON CAME TO BE.

THE American Capital is the only seat of government of a first-class power which was a thought and performance of the Government itself. It used to be called, in the Madisonian era, "the only virgin Capital in the world."

St. Petersburg was the thought of an Emperor, but the Capital of Russia long afterward remained at Moscow, and Peter the Great said that he designed St. Petersburg to be only "a window looking out into Europe."

Washington City was designed to be not merely a window, but a whole inhabitancy in fee simple for the deliberations of Congress, and they were to exercise exclusive legislation over it. So the Constitutional Convention ordained; and, in less than seven weeks after the thirteenth state ratified the Constitution, the place of the Capital was designated by Congress to the Potomac River. In six months more, the precise territory on the Potomac was defined, under the personal eye of Washington.

The motive of building an entirely new city for the Federal seat was not arbitrary, like Peter the Great's will with St. Petersburg, nor fanciful, like that of the founder of Versailles. It was, like many of our institutions, an act of reflection suggested by such harsh experience as once drove the Papal head from Rome to Avignon, and, in our day, has withdrawn the French Government from Paris to Versailles. Four years before the Constitution was made, Congress, while sitting at Philadelphia, —the largest city in the States,—had been grossly insulted by some of the unpaid troops of the Revolutionary War, and the



Pennsylvania authorities showed it no protection. Congress with commendable dignity, withdrew to Princeton, and there, in the collegiate halls, Eldridge Gerry, of Massachusetts, (whose remains now lie in the Congressional Cemetery of Washington,) moved that the buildings for the use of Congress be erected either on the Delaware or the Potomac.

The State of Maryland was an early applicant for the permanent seat of the Government, and, after the result at Philadelphia, hastened to offer Congress its Capitol edifice and other accommodations at Annapolis. Congress accepted the invitation, and therefore, it was at Annapolis that Washington surrendered his commission, in the presence of that body. The career of Congress at Annapolis—which was a very perfect, tidy, and pretty miniature city—left a good impression upon the members for years afterwards, and was probably not without its influence in making Maryland soil the future Federal District. The growing “Baltimore Town,” which was the first place in America, after the revolution, to exhibit the Western spirit of “driving things,” appeared in the lobby and prints, as an anxious competitor for the award of the Capital; and the stimulation of that day bore fruits in the first and only admirable patriotic monument raised to Washington, while Washington City was yet seeking to survive its ashes. With the jealousy of a neighbor, the snug port and portage settlement of Georgetown opposed Baltimore, and directed attention to itself as deserving the Federal bestowal, and counted, not without reason, upon the influence of the President of the United States in its behalf.

Many other places strove for the exaggerated honor and profit of the Capital, and it is tradition in half-a-dozen villages of the country,—at Havre de Grace, Trenton, Wrightsville, Pa; Germantown, Pa; Williamsport, Md; Kingston, N. Y., and others—that the seat of government was at one time nearly their prize. Two points, however, gained steadily on the rest,—New York and some indefinite spot on the Potomac. The Eastern Congressmen, used to the life of towns, and little in love with what they considered the barbaric plantation life of the South, desired





to assemble amongst urbane comforts, in a place already established. Provincialism, prejudice, and avarice all played their part in the contest; and, in that day of paper money, it was thought by many that the currency must follow the Capital. Hence, according to Jefferson, whose accounts on this head do not read very clearly, the financial problems of the time were offset by the selection of the Capital. Hamilton deferred to the South the Federal City, and had his Treasury policy adopted in exchange for it. When Jefferson and Hamilton came to write about each other, we are reminded of the adage that, when the wine is in, the wit is out; but it is agreeable to reflect that they were both accordant with Washington on this point, and Jefferson had great influence over the young Capital's fortunes.

Congress made a reasonable decision on the subject. The comforts of a home were to be accorded at Philadelphia for ten years, to quiet Philadelphia, and meantime a new place was to be planned on the Potomac River, and public edifices erected upon it. The actual selection and plan were to be left to a commission selected by the President; and thus the Federal City is an executive act, deliberated between Washington and private citizens.

Mortifying, indeed, was the early work of making the Capital City for the three Commissioners, whose ranks were renewed as one grew despondent and another enraged.

It was July 16, 1790, that President Washington approved the bill of six sections which directed the acceptance of ten miles square "for the permanent seat of the Government," "between the mouths of the Eastern Branch and Conogochegue." The bill had become a law by a close vote in both Houses, and the Capital might have been placed, under the terms of it, at the Great Falls, or near the future battle-site of Ball's Bluff, or under the presence of the Sugar-Loaf Mountain, in the vale of the River Antietam. It is possible that Washington himself, who held discretionary control over the Commissioners, was not firmly of the opinion that the future city





should stand on tide-water; for he had previously written letters, in praise of the thrifty German country beyond the Monocacy, in Maryland. But the matter of transportation and passage was greatly dependent, in those days, upon navigable water-courses, and it is probable that, when the law passed, the spot of the city was already appointed.

About five years before selecting the site for the Federal Capital, Washington made a canoe upon the Monocacy River, and, descending to the Potomac, made the exploration of the whole river, from the mountains to tide-water, in order to test the feasibility of lock and dam navigation. It is apparent, from his letters to Arthur Young, the Earl of Buchan, and others, that he was aware that the value of his estates on tide-water was declining, and he wanted both the city and the canal contiguous to them. A noble man might well, however, have such an attachment to the haunts of his youth as to wish to see it beautified by a city.

The bill was passed while Congress sat in New York; six months later, on January 24, 1791, Washington, at Philadelphia, made proclamation that, "After duly examining and weighing the advantages and disadvantages of the several situations within the limits," he had thrown the Federal territory across the Potomac from Alexandria.

The site of the new district was not entirely the wilderness it has been represented. The Potomac had been explored up to this point, and as far as the Little Falls above, by Henry Fleet, one hundred and sixty years before. Fleet was the first civilized being who ever looked upon the site of Washington, and his manuscript story of ascending the river was never published until 1871. When Leonard Calvert arrived in the Potomac, in 1634, he went up to confer with this adventurous fur-trader, who had been many years in the country.

"The place," said Fleet, evidently alluding to the contracted Potomac just above Georgetown, "is, without all question, the most healthful and pleasant place in all this country, and most convenient for habitation; the air temperate in Summer and



not violent in Winter. It aboundeth with all manner of fish. The Indians in one night commonly will catch thirty sturgeons in a place where the river is not over twelve fathoms broad. And, for deer, buffaloes, bears, turkeys, the woods do swarm with them, and the soil is exceedingly fertile; but, above this place, the country is rocky and mountainous, like Canada. \* \* \* \* We had not rowed above three miles but we might hear the Falls to roar."

The early settlers of Maryland and Virginia kept to the navigable streams, and the earliest pioneers of the terrace country of Maryland were Scotch and Scotch-Irish, some Germans, and a few Catholics.

Georgetown and Bellhaven (or Alexandria) were rather old places when the surveys were made for Washington City, and the former had been laid out fully forty years. The army of General Braddock had landed at Alexandria, and a large portion of his army marched from Rock Creek, as the infant Georgetown was then called, for Fredericktown and the Ohio. As early as 1763, the father of Gen. James Wilkinson purchased a tract of "five hundred acres of land on the Tyber and the Potomac, which probably comprehended the President's house;" but the purchaser's wife objected to a removal to such an isolated spot, and the property was transferred to one Thomas Johns. In 1775, the young Wilkinson "shouldered a firelock at Georgetown, in a company commanded by a Rhode Island Quaker, Thomas Richardson," in which also the future Gen. Langan was a subaltern, and this full company drilled for the Revolutionary struggle "on a small spot of table-land hanging over Rock Creek, below the upper bridge." As Wilkinson lived "thirty miles in the up-country, and was always punctual at parade," we may infer that Georgetown was the most considerable place in all this quarter of Maryland. As early as 1779, William Wirt, whose parents resided at Bladensburg, went to "a Classical Academy at Georgetown;" and he and others long bore remembrance of the passage of the French and American armies from north to south over the ferry at that place, of





encampment at Kalorama Hill, and wagons loaded with specie crossing Rock Creek. Gen. Washington also designated Georgetown as one of the three great places of deposit for military stores; and so important was Alexandria that Charles Lee, in his plan of treason, had proposed to cut the Northern States from the South by occupying it with a permanent detachment of British troops, who should keep open the ferries between Alexandria and Annapolis, and, by menacing the rich farms of the German settlers in the up-country, compel them to starve out the Patriot armies.

The port-town of Bladensburg was now just upon the decline, and the period had come when the interior parts of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia were showing forth their promises. Maryland had contained considerably more population than New York during the Revolutionary War, and we may conceive Georgetown and Alexandria to have been amongst the best grade of secondary towns at that period. They stood, as now, in full sight of each other; and the ridgy basin and lower terraces between them, where the Federal City was to rise, presented a few good farms tilled by slaves, and was already marked for a couple of rival settlements before the Commissioners adopted it.

One of these prospective settlements was located near the present National Observatory, and took the name of Hamburg, afterward Funkstown, the other was projected near the present Navy-Yard, and was named after the proprietor of the estate, Carrollsburg. At any rate, there were enough people on the site to give the Commissioners a great deal of trouble with their bickering and rapacity; and it is likely that the idea got abroad in advance of the official choice, that here was to be the mighty Capital, and therefore lands and lots had been matters of considerable speculation.

Few who had passed the ferry at Georgetown, and beheld the sight from the opposite hills of Virginia, could fail to have marked the breadth of the picture, and the strong colors in the ground and the enviroing wall of wooded heights, which rolled back against the distant sky, as if to enclose a noble arena of



landscape, fit for the supreme deliberations of a continental nation.

Dropping down from those heights by stately gradations, over several miles, to a terrace of hills in the middle ground, the foreground then divided, parallel with the eye, into a basin and a plateau. The plateau on the right showed one prominent but not precipitous hill, with an agreeable slope, at the back of which the Potomac reached a deep, supporting arm, while around the base meandered a creek that changed course when half-way advanced, and then flowed to the left, parallel with knolls, straight through the plain, or basin,—defining to the inspired eye, as plainly as revelation, the avenues, grades, and commanding positions of a city.

As such, Washington must have builded it up in his own formative mind; for many a time he had passed it in review. He did not require to take note of the shiftless slave farms for which the ground had been already broken. Where yonder orchard grew, he saw the Executive Mansion, with its grounds extending down to the river-side cottage of that curmudgeon Scotch planter who was to be among the last to say words of impudence to the father of the city. Where the pleasant hill swelled up to the clear skies in the night, Washington saw the spiritual outlines of the fair white Capitol, soon to be embodied there. Flowing down into the plain, and extending back over the hill of the Capital, he realized the lower and the upper city, on which a circle of villas in the higher background should some day look down; and all the undulating space between the blue heights of Georgetown, from the river back to the table-land, should, by another century, smoke with population, worship with bells, and march with music to honor the founder of this virgin Capital.

Having named the three civil Commissioners to whom Congress—wiser than Congresses of a later period—committed the business of Capital-making, Washington set out from Philadelphia, to confer with them on the spot.

It is characteristic of Maryland roads in those days, in March,





that the President drove down the Eastern shore of Maryland, instead of crossing the Susquehanna, and was ferried over from Rockhall to Annapolis. At the latter place, he rested all Saturday, receiving hospitality; and, on Sunday, continued his journey by Queen Ann to Bladensburg, where he dined and slept. Next morning he took breakfast at Suter's tavern, a one-story frame in Georgetown,—having occupied one week in fatiguing and perilous travel from Philadelphia.

From the heights of Georgetown, Washington could look over the half-uncultivated tract, where the commissioners had plotted a part of their surveys for the Federal City, and Pennsylvania Avenue was then a path through an older swamp from Georgetown to Carrollsburg.

On Tuesday, a misty and disagreeable day, Washington rode out at seven o'clock, with David Stuart, Daniel Carroll, and Thomas Johnson, the three Commissioners, and with Mr. Andrew Ellicott and Major L'Enfant, who were surveying the grounds and projecting the streets of the city. "I derived no great satisfaction," says Washington, "from the review," and this we can readily suppose from our present knowledge of what might be the condition of the soil of the District in the spring of the year, on a damp day, with the landholders of Georgetown and Carrollsburg contending with each other by the way, with the numerous uninvited idlers pressing after, and the crude and tangled nature of the region.

That night at six o'clock, Washington endeavored to contrive an accommodation between the Georgetowners and Carrollsburgers, and it was probably at this time that he had reason to designate Davy Burns, the Scotch farmer and father to the future heiress of the city, as "The obstinate Mr. Burns." He dined that night at Colonel Forrest's, with a large company. The next day, the contending landholders agreed to Washington's suggestions, and entered into articles to surrender half their lots when surveyed; and, having given some of his characteristically precise instructions to the engineers and others, the President crossed the Potomac in the ferry-boat,





his equipage following, and dined at Alexandria, and slept that night at Mount Vernon, his homestead.

There is a statue of Washington in one of the public circles of the Capital City, representing him on a terrified steed doing battle-duty; but a local treatment of the subject would have been more touching and thoughtful; the veteran, of war and politics, worn down with the friction of public duty and rising party asperity, riding through the marshes and fields of Washington, on the brink of his sixtieth year, to give the foundling government he had reared an honorable home. Could a finer subject appeal to the artist or to the municipality of Washington; the virgin landscape of the Capital, and this greatest of founders of cities since Romulus, surrounded by the two engineers, the three commissioners, and certain courteous denizens, and seeking to reason the necessities of the state and the pride of the country into the flinty soul of Davy Burns, that successor of Dogberry,—for he is said to have been a magistrate?

The new city was one of the plagues of General Washington for the remainder of his days, because he was very sensitive as to its success; and it had to suffer the concentrated fire of criticism and witticism, domestic and foreign, as well as more serious financial adversity. He never beheld any of the glory of it; and the fact that he had been responsible for it, and had settled it in the neighborhood of his estates, probably weighed somewhat upon his spirits in the midst of that light repartee which a grave nature cannot answer. Greater is he who keepeth his temper than he who buildeth a city. That Washington did both well, the latter century can answer better than the former. The extravagant plan of Major L'Enfant has not been vindicated until now, when the habitations of one hundred thousand people begin to develop upon the plane of his magnificence. The neighbors of General Washington had no capacity in that early day to congregate in cities, and the Federal site had to wait for a gregarious domination and a period of comparative wealth. It is yet to be tested whether the ornamentation of the city is to conduce to an equally Republican



rule with that of more squalid times; for, New York excepted, Washington is now the dearest city in America.

The trustees of the Federal city in whom at law nominally reposed the conveyed property, were Thomas Beall and John M. Gauntt. The chief owners of the site were David Burns, Samuel Davidson, Notley Young, and Daniel Carroll.

The cost of the ground on which Washington City stands was truly insignificant as compared with the remarkable expenditures of the years 1871, '72, '73.

The few property-holders agreed to convey to the government out of their farm-lands as much ground as would be required for streets, avenues, public-building-sites, reservations, areas, etc., and to surrender, also, one-half of the remaining land, to be sold by the United States as it might deem fit,—receiving; however, at the rate of twenty-five pounds per acre for the public grounds, but nothing for the streets. In other words, the government through its three commissioners, was to plot out the Federal City in the first place, delineating all the grounds required for buildings and reservations, and surveying the parts to be inhabited. It was then to divide these inhabitable lots equally between itself and the landholders, and sell its own lots when, and on what prices and terms, it pleased, and, out of the proceeds of such sales, to make its payments for the national grounds and reservations.

In this way the government took seventeen great parcels of ground out of the general plan, such as now surround the Capitol, the President's House, etc., and the same amounted to five hundred and forty-one acres. At sixty-six dollars and sixty-six cents per acre, this yielded to the farm-holders thirty-six thousand ninety-nine dollars,—a very small sum indeed if we compute interest upon it, and subtract principal and interest from the present value of the ground.

The building lots assigned to the government numbered ten thousand one hundred and thirty-six. The amount of sales of these lots, up to the year 1834, was seven hundred forty-one thousand twenty-four dollars and forty-five cents, and an assess-

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ment upon the unsold lots, made at that time, brought the government's share up to eight hundred fifty thousand dollars. Besides this handsome speculation, the State of Virginia voted to the government the sum of one hundred twenty thousand dollars, and the State of Maryland seventy-two thousand dollars, as a concession for planting the great city on their borders. With equal courtesy, the government gave away a great many lots to such institutions as the Columbian and Georgetown Colleges, and the Washington and St. Vincents Orphan Asylums; and it also squandered many lots upon less worthy solicitors, giving a depot site away to a railway company in 1872, which was worth several hundred thousand dollars.

In the entire area included under the above agreement, there were seven thousand one hundred acres, with a circumference of fourteen miles. The uneven plain of the city extended four miles along the river, and averaged three-quarters of a mile in breadth. The only streams were the Tiber, which divided the plain nearly equally; James' Creek, emptying into the mouth of the Eastern Branch; and Slash Run, emptying into Rock Creek. These streams still preserve the names they received long before the capital was pitched. The first dedicatory act was to fix the corner-stone at Jones' Point, near Alexandria. James Muir preached the sermon, Daniel Carroll and David Stuart placed the stone, and the Masons of Alexandria performed their mystic rites.

A glimpse of the United States as it was at that day (1791) will complete the impression we may derive on thus revisiting the nearly naked site of the "Federal Seat." Virginia led all the states with nearly seven hundred fifty thousand people; Pennsylvania and New York combined did little more than balance Virginia with four hundred thirty-four thousand and three hundred forty thousand respectively. North Carolina outweighed Massachusetts with three hundred ninety-four thousand to the Bay State's three hundred seventy-nine thousand. All the rest of New England displayed about six hundred thousand population. South Carolina and Georgia with three



hundred thirty thousand people together, were inferior to Maryland and Delaware together by fifty thousand. There were only two Western States, Kentucky and Tennessee, whose one hundred eight thousand people lacked seventy-five thousand of the population of New Jersey and altogether, four millions of Americans were watching with various human expressions the puzzle of the capital town. Such was the showing of the census of 1790, but by the year 1800, when the infant city was occupied by its government, the country was one third greater in inhabitants. It was not until 1820 that any state passed Virginia, but in 1830 both New York and Pennsylvania had bidden her good-bye.

The capital was staked out the year after Franklin's death, thirty years before the death of George III, in Goethe's fifty-second year and Schiller's thirty-second, sixteen years before the first steamboat, two years before Louis XVI was guillotined, when Louis Phillipe was in his nineteenth year, while Count Rochambeau was commander of the French army, two years after Robespierre became head deputy, five years after the death of Frederick the Great, while George Stephenson was a boy of ten, the year subsequent to the death of Aden Smith, the year John Wesley and Mirabeau died, two years before Brissot was guillotined, in Napoleon's twenty-second year, the year before Lord Nott died, the year Morse was born and Mirabeau was buried, in the third year of the London Times, just after Lafayette had been the most powerful man in France, three years before the death of Edward Gibbon, while Warren Hastings was on trial, in Burke's sixty-first year and Fox's forty-second and Pitt's thirty-second, three years after the death of Chatham, in the Popedom of Pius VI, while Simon Bolivar was a child eight years old, the year Cowper translated Homer, and in Burns' prime.





## CHAPTER III.

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### THE CIVIL VS. THE CONGRESSIONAL SERVICE.

WHAT part of the government most requires correction, the executive or the legislative?

I do not think it will be a hasty answer to give the palm for corruption, looseness, and disorder to Congress. Perhaps it it would not be saying too much to add that this has been the fact ever since the government went into operation in 1789.

We came into the world with our teeth cut so far as party spirit went. The American people have changed much less since the colonial days than one would think, considering the enormous infusion of European material amongst us. In several of the colonies contests between the legislative power and the royal or provincial governors were rife for half a century before our common patriotic insurrection. Massachusetts, Vermont, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the Carolinas bore the same internal political aspect twenty years before Lexington that they did twenty years after Yorktown. The politician is almost invariably identical with the congressman. He reflects in the government the condition of the society, and particularly the character of the fraction which delegated him. In some cases he may be a commanding, suggestive spirit, with sufficient estate or personal following to impress himself upon the day and carry messages ahead of the society which he represents or the Congress to which he comes. But the representative system is truly so denominated in that the average Congressman lives near the level of the constituency, and in too many cases his real morality is beneath it. A very small proportion of voters do the work of the con-





stituency, and it is to the interest of the politician that this number be as small as convenient. His personal faction is generally made up of those who represent the positive wants of the constituency, in his day, and such elements of the constituency never propose to give the nation as much as they can take out of its common hopper. Hence what ought to be a deliberative body of the whole country is a succession of individuals bent on avaricious errands. One wants a new section added to the tariff and a gorgeous post-office building to ornament his principal town. Another is in pursuit of a railroad project which it is to the interest of a few rich men to have, and these in turn have got control of the county papers and give the intention the appearance of a public want. A third lives in a ship-building district where there are a great many hulls lying up with no place for them on the high seas, and it is an object of this Congressman to set back the maritime ideas of the world so that those vessels can recover supremacy, or if this cannot be done the Congressman is bound to make the whole nation in some way pay back to the vessel-owners in his constituency as much money as if they were fairly earning it. A fourth Congressman is desperately bent upon bringing into the Union the territory adjacent to his own state, with the promise that if he succeed he or his brother-in-law (for brothers-in-law constitute a formidable kinship in our country) will be sent to the Senate from the new State. A fifth Congressman has no other real constituency than a bank or a coalition of contractors in public works. A sixth comes from a district where some one nationality, as the German, or Scandinavian, or Irish prevails over all others, and he demagogues to this alone. In some of the larger cities, where there may be two, three, four, or five Congressmen a pool is made by the municipal ring *regnant*, and the seats at Washington are given out for money, friendship, admiration, gratitude, or in deference to some class, national, or religious influence. Of course the representative system is not faulty in any of these cases, for what sends the Congressman to Washington generally directs attention



and often enterprise in the constituency. The consequence is that the American Congress, except in great national emergencies, is an aggregation of selfish atoms. The larger operations of the country, which are conducive to its ideal and serious glory, are every day speared through and through by somebody who would spare no energy to pluck enough from the common purse to ornament his particular district.

Mr. Holman, of Indiana, gave an instance of this at the close of the last Congress when he rose in his place and objected to an appropriation to make observations on the transit of Venus in the year 1874. Mr. Holman, however, was animated by a narrow desire to save money to his tax paying constituency. What concerned everybody, and learning in particular, was of no concern to his voters as he had apprehended them. But had his little town of Aurora been *omnibussed* with a dozen other towns for a grand Marine Hospital or District Court building, Mr. Holman would not have raised his voice, even had he known that there were buildings already more than sufficient for the purpose; the country newspapers of both parties would pounce upon him instantly and demand that he be sacrificed because he would not be a party to plundering the general treasury in aid of the vanity of his neighborhood. Where have we an unselfish constituency in the United States? And how many broad-minded men of state can exist in Congress under the nature of American constituencies? The fault is more than half with the constituency, and the course of the constituency, as we have always had it in America, may be called *provincialism*. To four-fifths of all our journals provincialism sets the key. In the same proportion runs criticism on public affairs at the fireside circle, in the average pulpit, and in the town-meeting.

The few institutions which directly appertain to the General Government, and are the property, more or less directly, of the whole nation, have been the subject of attack ever since the Government was instituted;—West Point, the Naval School, the Regular Army, Washington City, the National Observatory,





a responsible and durable civil service, the public navy yards, the public officers which do not lie within the constituency, and all such organic matters. Private ship-builders inevitably denounce the building of naval vessels in the public navy yards, although it would seem to every reasoning man that the officers who were to sail the ships and trust their lives to them and fight with them ought to be the best constructors. But woe to the Congressman from the banks of the Delaware, the Kennebec, or the East River who casts his vote in favor of the performance of this general function by the legitimate power. As a consequence we have a navy that decays every six years, built at the private ship-yards of green timber with hasty carpentry and all the appurtenances of a job. In the height of the war a ship-yard lobby crowded Congress; and everybody remembers how a flighty private engineer at Brooklyn had sufficient influence to compel a vessel constructed at the Government yard to be tied at a wharf beside his own and the revolutions of the engine in the two vessels counted as a determination of speed. That vessel with which the private ship-yard challenged the Government boat to a stationary trial of speed is now a fish-factory near Greenport, Long Island, and was sold for little more than the price of a laborer's frame dwelling. And yet at the time her contractors called everybody in the opposition atrocious names, his Congressmen stood up for this experimental constituent against all the naval engineers in the world, and the Government was plundered of the money as truly as if the builder of the ship had been a traitor to his country and had sunk an American vessel on the seas.

For reasons such as I have mentioned Congress and the Bureau officers of the Government have produced very unlike exponents. A Bureau officer, by the nature of his duties, grows conservative, methodical, and reticent, and sometimes takes upon himself a natural dignity highly offensive to the Congressman who rushes up with a letter from Jones, who has the chief saw-mill in the Wabash district and demands within five minutes to know some secret, the revelation of which might be a breach



of official etiquette, or which at any rate, should require a decent consideration before the exposure be made.

In the Bureaus of the United States are some of the most accomplished officials to be found in the Governments of civilization. It is really extraordinary to see how the old fashioned salaries will retain men of often exceptional rank in the public service. This is the case at present as truly as it was at the beginning of the Government, which in the hands of private inventors would become monopolies and used to make the State pay tribute. The Patent office of the United States was first organized by a one thousand five hundred dollar clerk,—the same Dr. Thornton who drew the elevations of the present capital and impressed the form of it upon the whole history of America.

In the Coast survey a mere pressman invented the important process of separating the steel and copper plates by an electro-galvanic deposit of nitrate of silver, so as to give the finest impression. The establishment of the National Observatory was a suggestion of a clerk, Lambert, who received but one thousand five hundred dollars, for laboring nearly twenty years, making frequent memorials, lobbying socially and taking the longitude of the Capitol as early as 1822. The Observatory itself might never have come into existence but for the action of a naval lieutenant, now Rear Admiral Goldsborough, who smuggled into existence under the name of a depot of charts and instruments, the nucleus of the present institution, which is comparable to Greenwich, and is now being provided with a refractory telescope superior in size to any in the world. But even here the contractor makes his appearance, for this telescope must be of American manufacture, although the object-glass had to be cast in the rough at Birmingham, England. The publisher of the Congressional Globe,—the man who made the enterprise a success, self sustaining, and kept it in existence for a quarter of a century—was John C. Rives, who was merely a clerk in the treasury at one thousand two hundred dollars





salary when Francis P. Blair, Sr.,—who had no business management adequate to the task—discovered him by accident

The Post Office Department as we see it in our time energized and so comprehensive and thorough that if our paper comes three hours late we make complaint, was the development of the clerical force and owes its vigor to Amos Kendall who was successively country postmaster, clerk, and auditor. In the Capitol building there is an assistant clerk with a salary of three thousand dollars a year, who has collated, edited, and indexed, and made a dissertation on parliamentary law which has become the standard book on this subject throughout the United States.

Such are examples of a few quiet men in the public service whose names come to mind. In these Departments it may be said that honesty is the rule and intrigue the exception. It is also true that even with the present grade of salaries many of these men satisfy their wants, educate their families and generally are possessed of some little property which will enable their families to live for a time without straits. The little buggy or carry-all and pony of the clerk is nearly as common in our streets as the coach and pair of the gorgeous Senator who has just struck oil or watered his Galena.

The general rise of real estate and the increase of local taxation are fast breaking up American homes, and the era is not distant when life in apartments must be the rule of American as of European cities for people of moderate incomes. The clerk of the class I have named often submits to what is now called the privations of country-life in order to keep his roof-tree separate and have his family around him. On the heights back of the city is a settlement of cozy cottages, many of them built of the old hospital lumber which was plentiful here just after the war, and this village, which bears the name of Mount Pleasant, goes by the name of Clerksville,—a pretty word, and if public service were held in the consideration that it might be, would politics allow, the name would convey a pleasant sense to the ear and the mind. Another town has sprung up across the





Eastern Branch which is set down as Howardsville, named after General Howard. Here also quite a number of clerks have betaken themselves, and it is agreeable when one rides out in the morning to see them quietly trudging along at eight o'clock to walk three miles to the Treasury. One of these Howardsville clerks has already got a name in American "historical literature." I mean Edward D. Neill, the author of the History of Minnesota, and to the credit of Senator Ramsay—our present consul at the city of Dublin—while President's clerk and chaplain at Washington and living on the grounds across the Eastern branch Mr. Neill collated from original papers the colonial history of Maryland under the name of "Terra Mariae," and a history of the London Company, which answers the same purpose for Virginia. While in Dublin he has published from entirely original data "the English Colonization of America during the Seventeenth Century." This latter book in several respects shows Mr. Bancroft and the more presumptuous historians of the country to be at fault as in the case of Pocahontas, whom Bancroft describes as having been wedded by "an amiable enthusiast who daily, hourly, and, as it were, in his very sleep had heard a voice crying in his ears that he should strive to make this young Indian maiden a Christian." So says our minister at Berlin,—but our consul at Dublin shows, from the pages of the London company's transactions, that Rolfe was a married man when he wedded Pocahontas, and that after his death there was a white widow and her children besides the son he had by Pocahontas asking support from the Company. In view of this development it is somewhat amusing to see one of the great panels in the rotunda of the Capitol covered with a depiction of the second act of matrimony by this apostolic bigamist.

Whatever corruption exists in the Bureaus at Washington will be found to be sustained by those arms of the service which come most frequently into contact with the politicians and Congressmen. The Land office and the Interior Department contain many efficient men, but the belief is current that railroad Congressmen have corrupted some of these, and when the first



shilling passes stealthily into the official's palm half the journey to vice is made already. In the Treasury Department corruption exists almost wholly where Congressmen control the appointments, as in the outer revenue offices and in the Custom Houses of the sea-board cities. But in the Treasury building at Washington there is an appearance of industry, method, and order which disarms suspicion, and when the visitor becomes acquainted with many of the heads of bureaus he will discover men of remarkable faculties and acquirements receiving quite ordinary but still sufficient salaries. The venerable Treasurer of the United States, General F. E. Spinner, preserves the respect even of Congress to such an extent that when defalcations have occurred in his office they have been made good in the appropriation bills without party division and without lobbying.

The Comptroller of the currency at present, whose name is an antique combination—John Jay Knox—is an official of the very highest grade, and although a young man, is perhaps as fully informed in monetary questions as any authority in an equally responsible position in any contemporary government. While Deputy Comptroller, with a salary of three thousand dollars, he prepared a mint and coinage bill which was a marvel of exactness, research, and perspicuity, and he was able, notwithstanding fierce local opposition, to make it a law of the country, so that the national mint will hereafter be directed from the Capital, and not made an ornamental station on a side-track for the provincial benefit of Philadelphia. Mr. Knox was also cashier of a bank when, perceiving opportunities for a more influential and intellectual career at Washington, he resigned and took a subordinate position in the Comptroller's Bureau. He had an indirect influence in bringing out the State of Virginia under good government, by making Gilbert Walker, his class-fellow at college, President of the Norfolk National Bank, a place which brought Walker forward and enabled him to make the race for governor with success. Mr. Knox's predecessor was loose or unfortunate in the selection of his examiners, and some ugly developments were made after





the failure of some of the banks. When Mr. Hulburd retired a regular mob race was made for the vacant position about which there should not have been a particle of hesitation in the President's mind, for the next in succession was known to be the best qualified of all the candidates. However, civil service prevailed in this instance, and the new Comptroller soon demonstrated his executive courage by sending his examiner to inspect the affairs of all the banks in the District of Columbia which, owing their charters to congress, came within the sphere of his administration; showed that the Freedmen's Bank, which stands at the apex of the system of savings banks organized for the benefit of the emancipated laborers of the South, had been squandering its money on mortgages around the capital city to such an extent that but seven thousand dollars surplus out of three or four million appeared on its balance sheet. The ignorance of the majority of the depositors and the distance of the branch banks from the central bank prevented a run on this institution, but the warning was not without its lesson. Meantime a savings bank kept by a private person named Roth was shown, to the astonishment of everybody, to possess above one million dollars deposits and little or no surplus. The report of the examiner brought the town around the ears of this money-lender, and in the space of two days nearly three thousand dollars were drawn out of its coffers by the depositors and he had to hypothecate his bonds, mortgages, etc., to meet the run. This prompt exhibition of vigilance and discipline might have tumbled Mr. Knox out of his place had it not been that his social independence had meantime become such that his nerve was not that of a starveling. Had he delayed until some of these saving institutions, keeping their true condition a secret, and playing Wall Street with their deposits, failed and so started a series of explosions to consume the earnings of the poor and make a financial panic, he could hardly have been more hounded than by these pawnbrokers who abhor in general anything of investigation or exposure. The savings banks of the United States have more capital than the National



Banks of the country. Thus it would seem that the poor are stronger than the rich but unfortunately the rich obtain all the influence which the capital of the poor can give by its use. The Comptroller of the currency has uniformly discouraged the attachment of a savings department to national banks, and he is of the opinion that the principle of savings banks is much abused in all parts of the country and particularly in the West, where the most reckless operators often avail themselves of the enormous savings of the poor by means of charters lobbied through the legislatures or brought on the street. Some of the savings banks of New England are quite differently managed, and Mr. Knox instances one, I think at Newburyport, which had four million dollars deposits but was so well methodized and in such conservative management that it cost only about two thousand dollars a year to do all the clerical work of the bank.



## CHAPTER IV.

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### PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

ACCORDING to the whole of many authorities and a part of all, the city of Washington itself was a scheme and the public buildings severally were sown in corruption. That they have been raised in incorruption, however, is clear to the cheerful, patriotic mind; for the Capitol is the ornament in some manner of nearly every American dwelling. The White House is the most beautiful building in the world to a politician aspiring toward it. Thousands of people would be glad to get as much as a hand in the Treasury or even a name in the Pension office.

These buildings make a continuous romance in respect to their design, construction, and personal associations. In their day they were esteemed the noblest edifices on the continent, and elicited praise even from such censorious strangers as Mrs. Trollope. To this day the Capitol and President's house remain as they were exteriorly, the same in style and proportions, and the additions to the Capitol have been made consistent with the old elevation. The public is better satisfied with the Capitol from year to year, and many men of culture and travel even prefer the old freestone original edifice to the spacious and costly marble wings. The President's House has lost somewhat of its superiority as a residence, owing to the progress made in household comforts during the last half century, but it is still admired by the visitor for the extent, harmony, and impressiveness of its saloons. Both buildings and the city as well invite at this day our inquisitiveness as to how the young republic became possessed of architects and engineers of capacity equal to such ample and effective constructions.





The material for this inquiry is to be found in the journals and letter books of the early commissioners of the Federal City, which are kept on the crypt floor of the Capitol and are partly indexed. The personal story of the early architects must be obtained by family tradition and partly by recollection. The printed documents of congress continue the story of those constructions to our own day, but many of them are rare and some missing, because the Capitol has been three times devastated by fire which twice chose the library as the point of attack.

Let us first note the lives of the planners of the city itself.

They assembled at Georgetown with tents, horses, and laborers, and proceeded to plot the city upon the site, while the commissioners, acting for the executive, raised and supplied the money, dealt with the owners of the ground and negotiated with quarrymen, carters, and boat owners. Every step was a matter of delicacy, and conflicts were frequent between all parties. A high degree of personal independence prevailed in the late colonies and in military, political, and professional life, amounting in many cases to sensitiveness and jealousy.

The commissioners had little consonance of temperament with the professional men, many of whom were foreigners, and both had reason to dislike the natives who began by craving the boon of the city, and ended by showing all the forms of querulousness and discontent which rise from excited avarice.

First in consideration is the man out of whose mind and art were drawn the design of Washington city as we find it still. Peter Charles L'Enfant was born in France, 1755, and made a Lieutenant in the French provincial forces. Touched at an early period in the American revolution with the spirit of the American Colonies and the opportunities afforded in the new world for a young officer and engineer he tendered his services in the latter capacity to the United States in the autumn of 1777. He received his wish and the appointment of Captain of Engineers February 18, 1778. At the siege of Savannah he was wounded and left on the field of battle. After cure he took a position in the army under the immediate eye of Washington



and was promoted Major of Engineers May 2, 1873. Hence the rank with which he descends to history.

At the close of the Revolution L'Enfant commended himself to Jefferson who almost monopolized the artistic taste and knowledge of the first administration, and as the project for a Federal city developed L'Enfant was brought into very close relations with President Washington. The artistic and the executive mind rarely run parallel, however, and very soon Washington heard with indignation that L'Enfant, enamored of his plan of the city, had refused to let it be used by the Commissioners as an incitement and directory to purchasers. The excuse of L'Enfant appears to have been that if acquainted with the plan speculators would build up his finest avenues with unsuitable structures. Washington's letter displays both the ability and weakness of his architect and engineer:

"It is much to be regretted," he says, "that men who possess talents which fit them for peculiar purposes should almost invariably be under the influence of an untoward disposition \* \*. I have thought that for such employment that he is now engaged in for prosecuting public works and carrying them into effect. Major L'Enfant was better qualified than any one who had come within my knowledge in this country or indeed in any other I had no doubt at the same time, that this was the light in which he considered himself."

This letter was written in the autumn of 1791, eight months after Jefferson instructed L'Enfant as follows:

"You are directed to proceed to Georgetown where you will find Mr. Ellicott in making a survey and map of the Federal territory." Jefferson then distributed the responsibility by prescribing as L'Enfant's duty "to draw the site of the Federal town and buildings." He was to begin at the Eastern branch and proceed upwards, and the word "Tyber" is used thus early in the history of the city as applying to the celebrated creek of that name, long afterwards the eye-sore of the city.

As between the immortal patron of the new city and the poor military artist posterity will expend no sympathies upon L'Enfant.





but there was probably a provincial hardness amongst the Commissioners and a want of consideration for the engineers, for even "Ellicott," also a man of uncommon talents in his way and of a more placid temper, was incensed at the slights put upon him.

Jefferson wrote to L'Enfant Nov. 21, 1791, that he must not delay the engraving of his map by over nicety and thus spoil the sale of town lots, which it appears brought as good prices without the map as with it; for he had written in October that "the sales at Georgetown were few but good." They averaged two thousand four hundred the acre.

The Map was not produced, however, and his appeals over the heads of the Commissioners on points of difference were decided against the artist. His task lasted but one year and was abruptly terminated March 6th, 1792, as the following letter of Jefferson to the Commissioners shows:

"It having been found impracticable to employ Major L'Enfant about the Federal city in that degree of subordination which was lawful and proper, he has been notified that his services are at an end. It is now proper that he should receive the reward of his past services and the wish that he should have no just cause of discontent suggests that it should be liberal. The President thinks of two thousand five hundred dollars or three thousand dollars, but leaves the determination to you. Ellicott is to go on and finish laying off the plan on the ground and surveying and plotting the district."

L'Enfant's reputation and acquaintance were such that he might have done the new city great injury by taking a position to its detriment, and Washington wrote that "the enemies of the enterprise will take the advantage of the retirement of L'Enfant to trumpet the whole as an abortion." It appears, however, that L'Enfant was loyal to the government and the city, for he lived on the site and in the neighborhood all his days, and several times afterwards came under the notice of the executive and was a baffled petitioner before Congress.

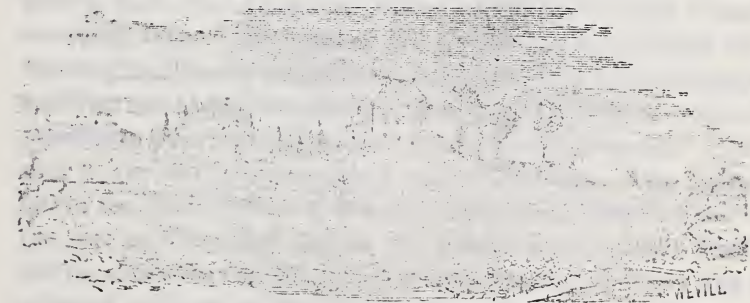
We hear of him in 1794 in the public employment as Engi-



neer at Fort Mifflin below Philadelphia and after a long lapse as declining the Professorship of Engineers at West Point, July, 1812.

Christian Hines, referred to elsewhere, told me that he had seen Major L'Enfant many a time wearing a green surtout and never appearing in a change of clothes, walking across the commons and fields followed by half a dozen hunting dogs. Mr. Hines reported with some of his company to L'Enfant at Fort Washington in 1814 to do duty, and that officer, who was in temporary command, filled him a glass of wine in his old broadly hospitable way and told him what to do.

The author of the plan of the city led a long and melancholy career about Washington and died on the farm of Mr. Digges in Prince George's County, about eight miles from the Capital he planned. The Digges family were allied to the Carrolls of Duddington, and had pity upon the military gentleman who had been



MAJOR L'ENFANT'S RESTING PLACE—THE DIGGES FARM.

at once so capable, so willful, and so unfortunate. The banker Corcoran has a distinct remembrance of L'Enfant as he lived, a rather seedy, stylish old man with a long blue coat buttoned up on his breast and a bell-crowned hat, a little moody and lonely like one wronged. He wrote much and left many papers which Mr. Wyeth of Washington told me he had inspected. He would not abate a particle of his claim against the Government, being to the last as tenacious of the point of pride as when he refused his maps to the Commissioners to be the accessory of the auctioneer and the lot speculator. The Digges farm was





purchased by the banker, George Riggs, Esq., many years after L'Enfant's death, and a superb stone mansion and a chapel for worship were erected upon the pleasant hill where the architect of the ruling city sleeps. In the garden planted by the Digges family there had been one of those private burial grounds not uncommon in Maryland and quite common to Catholic families. Amongst the people who closed his eyes he was laid to rest in June, 1825, at the age of seventy. Mr. Riggs says that subsequently a member of the Digges family committed suicide and the negroes buried this person *cursewise* to L'Enfant's body. The leading members of the family were disinterred afterward and the old soldier left there nearly alone. Some measures were suggested for giving him a monument at the time I made these inquiries.

L'Enfant's judgment was not equal to his imagination, but he had taste, knowledge, and amplitude, and with a richer patron than the American Nation might have made a more sounding fame. His plan of the capital city is gradually vindicating itself as the magnificent distances fill up with buildings, and the recent happy expedient of parking the streets has made it possible to pave them all without extraordinary expense. Such as it is, the city is irrevocably a part of his fame. One cannot fail to see that he drew it from the study of LeNotre's work in the city of Versailles and in the forests contiguous to Paris, where aisles, *routes*, etc., meet at broad open *carrefours* and a prospect or bit of architecture closes each avenue. Washington city in its grand plan is French; in its minor plan Quaker. It is the city of Philadelphia griddled across the city of Versailles. Anybody who will look at the design of the house which L'Enfant built for Robert Morris at Philadelphia after he was discharged from the public service,—that house which so far exceeded the estimates, that it was pulled down after the ruin of Morris and the materials made a quarry of—will observe that it is very much in the style of Mansard and the French architects of the seventeenth century. Thus the French alliance with America brought to our shores the draughtsman





of the government city, and few men have had it in their power to define so absolutely a stage for historical and biographical movement. As L'Enfant made the city it remains, with little or no alteration. And his misfortunes and poverty contrasted with his noble opportunity will always classify him with the brotherhood of art and genius, and make him remembered as long as the city shall exist.

The first quarrel which L'Enfant had with the commissioners related to the destruction of a mansion belonging to one of the proprietors of the ground, the aged Daniel Carroll, who had begun to build a great brick house which he called "Duddington," in the middle of New Jersey Avenue right under the Capitol. As this house embarrassed the engineer's much beloved plan and assumed for itself the importance of a public edifice, L'Enfant issued an order for its demolition. The commissioners protested but the artist gave orders to his Lieutenant, Isaac Roberdeau, to pull down the structure in his absence while he meantime should be at Acquia Creek where he had leased the quarries of Brent and Gibson. Roberdeau was stopped by Carroll who sent a courier to Annapolis to get an injunction, but seeing the speed the Frenchman was making in the interval Carroll served a local magistrate's warrant upon him. When L'Enfant returned and found his orders unfulfilled he quietly organized a gang of laborers and in the evening these set to work and reduced the presumptuous edifice with a hearty diligence which led to a shower of complaints from both proprietors and commissioners. Carroll proposed to sue L'Enfant; Roberdeau was discharged and the artist in chief kept his place only two months longer. The Administration directed Duddington House to be reconstructed as it was before but in another spot, and there it remains to-day, a grim old relic surrounded with a high brick wall and a park of forest trees.

Andrew Ellicott, the consulting and practical engineer of the new city, was a native of Bucks county, Pennsylvania, where his English father emigrated in 1730. He and two brothers had moved from Pennsylvania in wagons in 1772 and started



the town of Ellicott's Mills and were promoters of the fortunes of Baltimore and enterprising merchants, manufacturers, agriculturists, and inventors. They were the fathers of good road building, of iron rolling and copper working in Maryland, and inventors of many useful things, such as the wagon-brake. Andrew Ellicott was in the prime of life,—thirty-seven years old,—when he rode out with Washington to inspect the embryo city. Of all the party he was the most intellectual unless we except L'Enfant; for although a Quaker he had commanded a battalion of militia in the revolution, and it gives us a wondering insight into the resources of the American Colonial mind to find that this companion of Franklin, Rittenhouse, and Washington learned the elements of what he knew at the little Maryland milling place he established.

Ellicott had surveyed portions of the boundaries of New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, executed a topographical map of the country bordering on Lake Erie, and made the first accurate measurement of Niagara Falls. He had besides been a member of the Maryland Legislature. His more tractable and accommodating disposition secured him the honor of finishing the work of L'Enfant, and it appears that he was paid while on this service five dollars a day and his expenses.

In 1792 he became Surveyor General of the United States, laid out the towns of Erie, Warren, and Franklin in Pennsylvania, and constructed Fort Erie. In 1796 he determined the boundary line separating the republic from the Spanish possessions, and for many years subsequently was Secretary of the Pennsylvania state land office. His acquaintance and correspondence were with the most eminent people of his day in America and Europe, and in 1812 he was made Professor of Mathematics at West Point, where he died August 28, 1820, at the age of sixty-six. One of his family, Mr. Jos. C. G. Kennedy, was Superintendent of the United States census in 1860, and is now a resident of Washington. Amongst the assistants to run the lines of the new city was one man entitled to the future consideration of all his race, Benjamin Banneker, a negro.





He was at this time sixty years of age and a native of Ellicott's Mills and the protégé of the family of Andrew Ellicott. He is represented to have been a large man of noble appearance with venerable white hair, wearing a coat of superfine drab broad cloth and a broad brimmed hat, and to have resembled Benjamin Franklin. He was honored by the commissioners with a request to sit at their table, but his unobtrusive nature made him prefer a separate table. He was not only considerably cared for by these gentlemen, but Mr. Jefferson with his broad encouragement for learning and ability had praised an almanac he constructed, and the black man's proficiency in the exact sciences had given him a general reputation. He was sometimes too fond of a glass, but made it a matter of pride that at Washington he had carefully avoided temptation. Banneker died in 1804, and his grave at Ellicott's Mills is without a mark.

Thus much for the makers of the plan of the city. The trials and quarrels of the architects will be found even more romantic.

With all his discouragements concerning it Washington kept up the gleam of belief in the fortunes of his namesake city and called attention to it in letters to the Earl of Buchan and his old neighbor Mrs. S. Fairfax. To the latter, who was in England, he wrote the year before his decease :

"A century hence, if this country keeps united, it will produce a city though not as large as London yet of a magnitude inferior to few others in Europe."

Three quarters of that century have expired and Washington is a city of one hundred and fifty thousand people. By the year 1900 this should increase to two hundred and fifty thousand. At the time Washington wrote, London had eight hundred thousand inhabitants.



## CHAPTER V.

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### THE ARCHITECTS OF THE CAPITOL AND THEIR FEUDS.

The first architect of the Capitol in the proper sense of a professional man was Stephen S. Hallet, whose name is also spelled *Hallate*. About this gentleman, whose career on the public buildings was very brief, no recollections and scarcely a tradition prevails. It has been generally said that he was an Englishman and a pupil of the celebrated John Nash of London. It is apparent however, from the books of the Commissioners, that Hallet was a Frenchman. He is addressed by them as Monsieur Hallet and referred to by them as a French artist. They also apologize for writing him a letter by saying that the difficulty of making explanations between themselves and him verbally suggests the former manner of communication. Hallet sent his plan to the Commissioners and they received it July 17, 1792. They were struck with the evidences of his professional capacity, and invited him to visit the spot as soon as he could. These were the old Commissioners, Johnson, Stewart, and Carroll. It appears that Hallet's plans, which were several in number, had about commended him as the author of the building, and he was employed in that capacity when Dr. Thornton, an Englishman, also presented a plan which the Commissioners requested him to lodge with the Secretary of State at Philadelphia. This latter plan, although drawn by an amateur, affected both Jefferson and Washington to such a degree that a letter was at once despatched to the Commissioners requesting them to adopt it and to substitute it for Hallet's, but to do this with as much delicacy as possible and to retain Hallet in the public service. This peremptory order probably gave the Com-





missioners much relief if we may believe the statement of George Hadfield, another architect who wrote twenty years later to the following effect :

“ A premium had been offered of five hundred dollars and a building lot for the best design for a capitol, at a time when scarcely a professional artist was to be found in any part of the United States ; which is plainly to be seen from the pile of trash presented as designs.”

It does not appear that Monsieur Hallet received in a cordial way this assurance that an English amateur had made a superior elevation to his own, and he drew again and again designs while Thornton's were also amended after the foundations of the Capitol had been raised to the ground level. The situation was further embarrassed by Thornton's appointment as one of the Commissioners where he came into conflict with his predecessor in an administrative as well as a professional way. Mr. Hallet, in deference to Jefferson's suggestion, was employed at four hundred pounds per year, November 20, 1793. More than nine months previously, on April 5, 1793, the Commissioners wrote to Thornton : “ The President has given his formal approbation of your plan.” The changes in Thornton's design were, however, made so nearly like that of Hallet's, particularly as to the interior, that Monsieur demurred to the premium being accorded to Doctor Thornton. Quarrels ensued and Hallet withheld his drawings and wrote a letter to the Commissioners June 28, 1794, saying : “ I claim the original invention of the plan now executing and beg leave to lay hereafter before you and the President the proofs of my right to it.” Thereupon the Commissioners demanded the plans and Monsieur Hallet refused to surrender them. He was then verbally acquainted with the order that their connection with him had ceased and he was no longer in the public service. From this time forward there is no notable mention in the Commissioner's books of this unfortunate architect, and I have not been able to find any traditions respecting him. His successor was George Hadfield, who continued on the work until May 10, 1798. Mr.





Hallet's account, amounting to upwards of one hundred and seventy-six pounds, was allowed by the Commissioners.

His name, however, had been deposited in the corner-stone as one of the architects, and subsequent developments have in a great measure vindicated his claim as a principal suggestor of the building. About seventy years after his disappearance from the public view a son of B. H. Latrobe, the real builder of the wings, returned to Washington Hallet's drawings. Mr. Clark the architect passed them over to the Librarian of Congress in 1873. I was permitted to make sketch copies of Hallet's plans, and Mr. Clark came into the library while I was drawing from these plans and expressed his opinion that Hallet was the real architect, that what he called his "fanciful plan" had been borrowed by Thornton and changed to such a degree that Hallet was overridden in the premises. He called my attention to this memorandum in Hallet's handwriting:

"A grand plan accompanied this (elevation) which Dr. Thornton sent for, together with my plan in pencil."

On another drawing the following memorandum in Hallet's handwriting appeared:

"Sketch of the groundwork: part of the foundations were laid by sometime in August, 1793, now useless on account of the alterations since introduced.  
S. HALLET."

Other drawings by Mr. Hallet were endorsed as follows:

"The ground floor of a plan of the Capitol, laid before the board in October, 1793."

"Plan of the ground and principal floor sent from Philadelphia to the board in July, 1793."

Doctor William Thornton came to America, like Alexander Hamilton, from the West India Islands. He was a man of a good deal of amateur talent, and his introduction to Jefferson brought him to live on the Capitol site where he remained for the remainder of his days. He would appear to have been of an officious, buoyant, persevering disposition, and after he was relieved as Commissioner he gathered together models and curi-



osities in an abandoned hotel which stood on the site of the present general Post-office, and these curiosities were spared at his intercession from the British incendiary and became the nucleus of the present Patent Office collection, of which, while nominal clerk, Thornton was really the first Commissioner. He was also the founder of the first race track at Washington, and took delight in blooded horses, entering the lists with the great John Tayloe, the chief stock breeder and the richest citizen of the District. Dr. Thornton always insisted with vehemence that he was the original architect of the Capitol, and no doubt his picture of the elevations brought the administration to a conclusion. Jefferson says of it: "The grandeur, simplicity, and beauty of the exterior, the propriety with which the apartments are distributed and economy in the mass of the whole structure recommended this plan." The next day he says that Thornton's plan has captivated the eyes and judgment of all. "It is simple, noble, beautiful, excellently distributed, and moderate in size. \* \* Among its admirers no one is more decided than he whose decision is most important," meaning Washington.

Mr. Jefferson, at the time above referred to, was held in great consideration by Washington. He had been stationed at the Court of France and was known to have a fine fancy for the arts and to take a patron's delight in the legislative edifices of his country. We can get an idea of his sentiments on art from a letter which he wrote April 10, 1791. He says:

"For the capitol I should prefer the adoption of some of the models of antiquity, which have had the approbation of thousands of years—and for the President's House I should prefer the celebrated founts of modern buildings."

A controversy sprang up amongst the architects, which outlived the life of Washington, and Thornton was put upon the defensive. In 1804, Mr. Latrobe addressed a report to Congress in which he denounced Thornton's plan and animadverted with some severity upon the principle of competition for designs of great public buildings, saying that "A picture" was not a





plan, and intimating that Thornton's work in the premises was merely pictorial. To this Thornton rejoined in a pamphlet, of which a copy exists in the Congressional Library,—a purchase with Mr. Jefferson's collection. Thornton says:

"Mr. Hallet was not in the public service when or since I was appointed commissioner, which was on the twelfth day of September, 1791. *Mr. Hadfield* was appointed to superintend the work at the Capitol, October 15, 1795." Thornton says further:

"Mr. Hallet changed and diminished the senate room, which is now too small. He laid square the foundation at the centre building, excluding the dome; and when General Washington saw the extent of the alterations proposed he expressed his disapprobation in a style of such warmth as his dignity and self-command seldom permitted. \* \* \* Mr. Hallet was desirous not merely of altering what might be improved, but even what was most approved. He made some judicious alterations, but in other instances he did injury \* \* \*. When General Washington honored me with the appointment of commissioner he requested that I should restore the building to a correspondence with the original plan."

It further seems that Washington addressed the commissioners, Gustavus Scott, William Thornton, and Alexander White, February 27, 1797, expressing his "Real satisfaction with their conduct," which involved an endorsement of Thornton's ideas.

Mr. Hallet's first design for the capitol, as well as the modifications and amendments of the same, show that he was an architect of very perfect knowledge. Mr. Clark, as we have said, the architect in 1873, told me that he had heard that Hallet was a pupil of Nash, who was the leading English architect of his period. Nash was born in London in 1752, and after undergoing a course of training in his profession and practising it for some time, withdrew under the delusion of speculation and lost considerable sums of money. When he returned to his profession he met with very great success and opened an office in London in 1792. He designed and con-



structed numerous splendid mansion houses for the nobility and gentry in England and Ireland, and performed some of the most celebrated street improvements in the British metropolis. He was an inventor as well, and in 1797 obtained a patent for improvement in the construction of arches and piers of bridges, which led him to assume the credit of introducing the use of cast-iron girders. His work in London has been quite celebrated, including the fashioning of Regent Street and its beautiful blocks, the Langham Place Church, the Haymarket Theater, the terraces in Regent's Park, and the pavilion at Brighton. England contains many superb interiors and imposing mansion-houses accredited to him, and he lived until 1835.

It would be interesting only to architects to go at length into a discussion of the relative cleverness of Thornton's original plan, of Hallet's plans and of the amended Capitol as we see it to-day, the work of Latrobe and Bulfinch. The building has received the general approval of the public sentiment, and with the magnificent marble extensions of Mr. Walter,—which are a pattern with the old Capitol,—is one of the most imposing buildings in the world. Thornton's original design of the Capitol had but one dome, a great eagle in the pediment, a statue with a club on the top of the pediment flanked by two female statues on the balustrade, and oak or laurel encompassed the rounded top of the chief window in each wing.

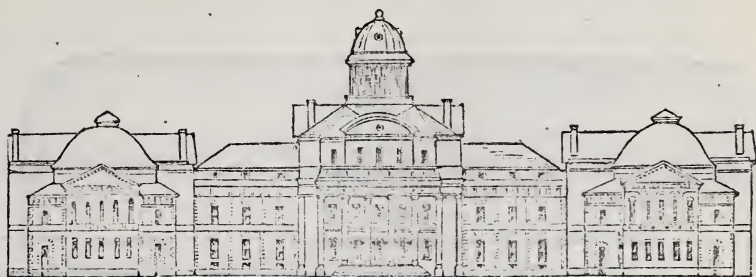
The original plan by Hallet placed the dome outside of the rectangle of the center and put the senate chamber in that rotunda. The center of the building was made a square open court with a covered walk around the sides and a carriage turn in the middle. The Supreme Court took the place of the subsequent senate chamber and the Vice-President's room was semi-circular and facing the long main corridor which traversed the edifice lengthwise.

It would appear that Hallet was in Washington until February 22, 1795, for in the bunch of drawings recently consigned to the library and which were doubtless sent to the authorities by Hallet to prove his right to the premium—there is one





"A fanciful plan and elevation which the President having seen accidentally in September, 1793, agreed with the commissioners to have the Capitol planned in imitation thereof."



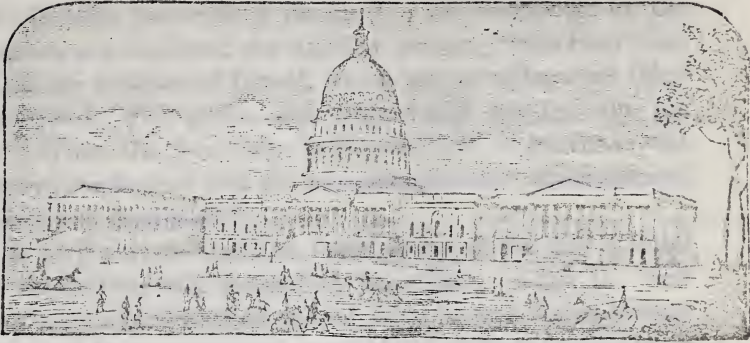
HALLET'S PLAN OF THE CAPITOL.

Hallet's "Fanciful plan" was surmounted by a dome with drum pillars and a light open cupola. Six Doric columns supported the center which upheld a curved pediment with a large eagle in the tympanum, and below were four standing colossal figures of WAR, PEACE, JUSTICE, and TIME. Three columns flanked the portico, which had four doors of equal size and low flights of steps. Shallow curtains with one door and one window connected in the center with the wings, which consisted of a basement and one story. The basement was of stone rusticated, and the portico above had four Ionic columns flanked by windows flush with the portico. In the pediment of each of the wings was a group of statuary of half a dozen figures, representing war and peace. In the recess under the porticoes were three designs in relief over the three doors which opened upon the portico. Hallet's "Fanciful plan" was borrowed by Thornton.

We may congratulate ourselves that the present state of the arts and the unity of official direction in this country prevent such scandals in public construction as attended the building of the old Capitol. It does not appear that any harmony prevailed, and dishonesty was often charged and sometimes proved. The early commissioners accused L'Enfant, Roberdeau, Baoroaf, and others of circulating on the spot infamous falsehoods to



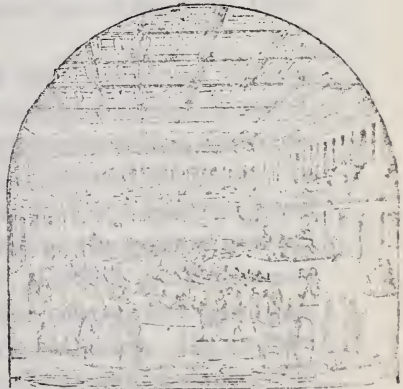




CAPITOL.



SENATE CHAMBER.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.



the prejudice of our character. Hadfield says that unfavorable reports were taken to General Washington of Thornton's ground plan, and he was ignorantly advised to retain the elevations and change the interior plans. The corner stone had no sooner been laid than "squabbles began; differences, factions, and broils were the order of the day." The contractor for the foundation was displaced for another mason, "who used what is called the continental trowel, which was wheelbarrows filled promiscuously with stones and mortar and emptied on the walls. When the foundation was completed or nearly so, the whole was condemned and the second contractor or continental trowelist was dismissed."

It is very certain that the foundations of the first Capitol were condemned and obliged to be rebuilt. After the first crop of commissioners had passed away it was found that at least two of their successors were short in their accounts or had kept no responsible accounts whatever. Mr. Hadfield, to whom we shall come directly, who resided in the city until his death and lived to see the reconstruction of the wings, published at the time a dignified criticism upon the edifice with these admissions:

"The proper way to have built the Capitol was to have offered an adequate sum to the most eminent architect in any of the European cities, to furnish the design and working drawings, also a person of his own choice to superintend the work. In that case the Capitol would have been long ago completed and for half the sum that has been expended on the present wreck."

The second architect in order is Mr. Hadfield, an Englishman who had been requested to come to this country and give some responsibility to the work on the public buildings. He received the endorsement of that undoubted genius, Latrobe, who employed him between 1803 and 1817 after the commissioners had cast him off, and he bore testimony that Hadfield had "talent, taste, and knowledge of art." Mr. Hadfield left behind him abiding proofs to the same effect in the City Hall and in the two remaining department buildings which he constructed





"Of brick in the Ionic order with freestone basements," two on each side of the President's house, namely, Treasury and State, War and Navy buildings. He could agree with the commissioners but a short time, one of whom was Thornton aforesaid, and instead of discharging Hadfield courteously it appears by their minutes that on May 10, 1798, they gave notice to a citizen, Mr. William Brent, to tell Hadfield that he was no longer in their employ. Hadfield died in Washington, February, 1826. His successor was James Hoban, who must have then lived elsewhere, probably in Maryland, where he had married, for he was ordered May 28, 1798, to superintend the building of the Capitol, to remove to the city, and to occupy Hadfield's house, or if he did not get it to charge his rent in some other dwelling to the government.

At this time Hoban was architect of the President's house as well as of the Capitol, and he was allowed for the moment to draw his full salary on both buildings. He received a hundred guineas a year for his subsequent attention to the President's house. Hoban was a native of Kilkenny County, Ireland, and was educated and taught the profession of an architect at Dublin. His living grand-son, James Hoban, is possessed of a medal awarded to the architect by the Dublin Society, for the best style of ornamental brackets. In 1780, Hoban, still unmarried, sailed from Ireland to Charleston, S. C. where he settled and soon received employment on the public and private constructions of the place. South Carolina has had the honor of furnishing two architects and a sculptor to Washington, Hoban, Robert Mills and Clark Mills.

At the conception of the Capital city, Mr. Laurens (Henry Laurens, long a State captive in the tower of London) gave Hoban a letter of recommendation to Washington. He speedily drew the prize for the President's palace and was employed to construct it, which he did with equal particularity, stability, and speed, so that it was habitable in 1799. It is traditional in the Hoban family that President Washington took exception to the style and proportions of the White House as inviting



criticism from severe Republicans, but that he gave up the point to the architect. It was revived, however, by Jefferson, of whom Tom Moore, Hoban's poet countryman, wrote in 1803: "The President's House, a very noble structure, is by no means suited to the philosophical humility of its present possessor, who inhabits but a corner of the mansion himself and abandons the rest to a state of uncleanly desolation. This grand edifice is encircled by a very rude paling through which a common rustic hill introduces the visitors to the first man in America."

As an instance of the boorish feeling prevailing between the Commissioners, citizens, and architects, we may mention that David Burns, who owned a large part of the ground taken up by the city, resisted the opening of a cartway over his land to haul stone from the landing to the White House, and also threatened to sue the Commissioners, and complained of Mr. Hoban for cutting his wood, saying: "Such persons are not responsible, because they have no property any body can lay hands on, but are miserable speculators and without thrift." Mr. Hoban built the first post-office at Washington and many other good buildings, but he also failed to please the civil authorities although he reconstructed the White House after 1814 and maintained his influence in the city to the end. Captain Hoban died in the year 1831, possessed of about sixty thousand dollars in property, and having lived a comfortable and active life. He was at first interred in the old graveyard of St. Patrick's Church, but the remains were removed at a later date to N. Olivet cemetery on the Bladensburg turnpike, where they lie at present. He left an efficient posterity, two sons in the U. S. Navy, another a priest, and a fourth, James, who was a fine Speaker and was United States Attorney of the District in the administration of President Polk. Hoban's residence is still standing at this writing on F street in the rear of 15th, on the north side, a landmark in itself. Sharp-gabled and very decrepit, and pointing toward the street. He married after he removed to Washington, and his wife was Miss Scuell of Maryland. He was a devout Catholic, and those who most distinctly recall him at



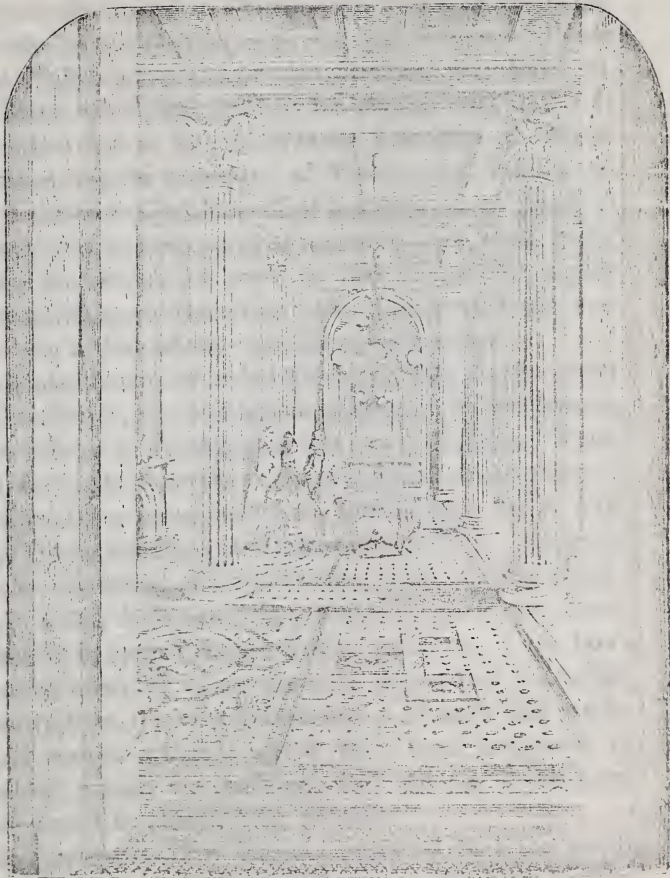


this day are clergymen like Fathers Lynch and McElroy. During the early building of the Capitol the clerk of the works, Lenthall, Blagden, the chief stone mason, and a citizen, Cocking, were killed upon it. The stone quarries used for the early public edifices were at Acquia creek and at Hamburg near the mouth of Rock Creek, the latter within the city limits; these quarries for stone and slate were purchased outright and cost twenty-nine thousand five hundred and fifty-eight dollars. The since celebrated Seneca stone was also used at a very early period for flagging and steps; the former cost about seven dollars a ton and the latter about fifteen dollars, delivered.

The fourth professional Architect of the Capitol was one of the remarkable men of the country. His constructions of both a public and private character are numerous at Washington and in other cities of the country. One of his sons, B. H. Latrobe, Jr., was afterwards made engineer of location and construction of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, July 1, 1836. He was the genius of that great mountain highway. He had been educated by his father, the architect, for a lawyer, but took to engineering, while his brother John H. B. Latrobe, educated for an engineer, became a lawyer of Baltimore, equally celebrated. The elder, Benjamin H. Latrobe, was born in Yorkshire, England, May 1, 1767, and was the son of Rev. Henry Latrobe, a Moravian clergyman of Huguenot descent, who figured as Superintendent of the Moravian establishments in England and as an author in the Church. The architect was educated at a village near Leeds, at the Moravian school of Weisky in Saxony and at the University of Leipsic. He was a cornet of Prussian Hussars, and made the tour of Europe, examining all the public buildings of note before he returned to England in 1782. He entered the office of Cockrell, an eminent English architect, and married the daughter of the rector of Clerkenwell parish. The death of his wife gave him such desire of change that in 1796 he resolved to come to America and visit an uncle, Colonel Antes. The ship brought him to Norfolk where by good luck he fell in with the officer of customs who introduced







MARBLE HALL, CAPITOL, WASHINGTON.



him to Judge Bushrod Washington, a nephew of President Washington, which led to his visiting Mount Vernon and becoming one of the fast young friends of that father of the Capital.

Richmond, Virginia, was then rapidly growing, and Latrobe designed the penitentiary and several fine private mansions. In 1798 he was established in Philadelphia where he built the old water works on Penn square and the old Banks of Pennsylvania and Philadelphia, and he also designed the Bank of the United States which was built by his pupil, Strickland. It is to be remarked that as Latrobe was the preceptor of Strickland, Strickland was the preceptor of Walter and Walter of Clark. As Latrobe availed himself of the services of Hadfield there has been a close succession of minds of the same order and of mutual inspiration at work on the Capitol for eighty years. Few buildings in the world have commanded the services for so long a time of men who knew each other.

At Philadelphia Latrobe married his second wife, the daughter of Robert Hazelhurst, who had been a partner of Robert Norris, the early speculator in Washington lots and buildings. From this second marriage arose the two eminent sons above referred to. Mr. Latrobe was summoned from Philadelphia to be surveyor of the Public buildings at Washington in 1803. He made a report at the beginning of the following year to this effect: "The hall in which the house of Representatives are now assembled was erected in part of the permanent building. I am, however, under the necessity of representing to you that the whole of the masonry from the very foundation is of such bad workmanship and materials that it would have been dangerous to have assembled within the building had not the walls been strongly supported by shores from without."

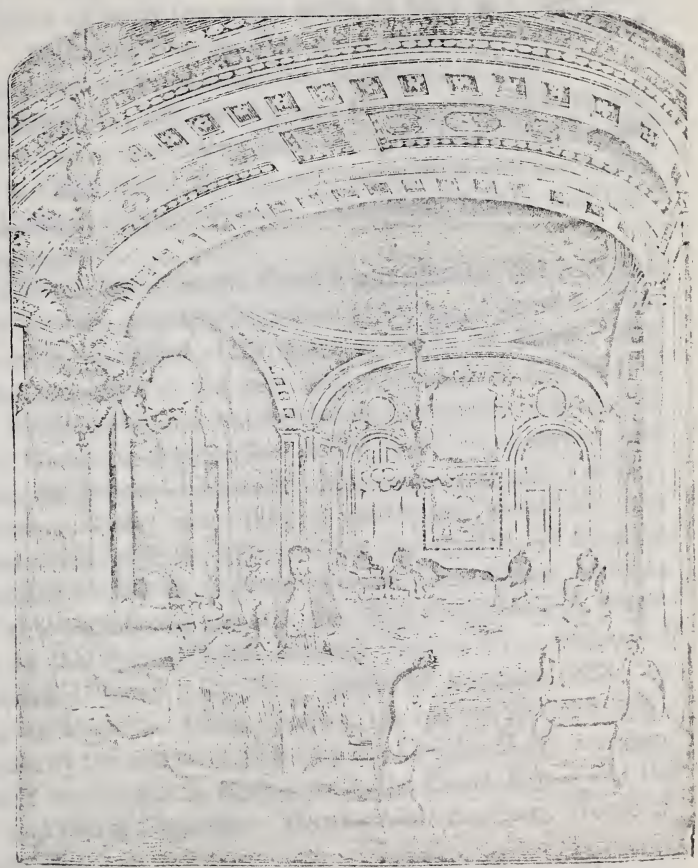
After due inspection Mr. Latrobe reported that the south wing of the Capitol required rebuilding from the very foundation. He also resolved upon a reformation of the outer plan and a very thorough change of the inner. This led to the criticism from his associate Hadfield, "That there is no conformity between the outer parts and the interior of the Capitol,





the original designs having been totally disregarded." Particularly does Hadfield denounce the raising of the entire floor throughout the building from the ground story to the principal order over the casement, excluding the light, making catacombs of the basement and turning an inferior part of the edifice into the superior uses." We may regard the east front and wings of the old freestone Capitol in mass as we see it as the design of Mr. Latrobe, who had sufficient influence with Mr. Jefferson to make him modify his extravagant praise of Thornton's design. The embargo and non-intercourse acts of that administration made money so scarce that very little was accomplished beyond finishing the interior of the wings, and when the Capitol was burnt in 1814, Latrobe, who was then absent at Pittsburg building the first steamboat to descend the western waters (jointly with Fulton, Livingstone, and Nicholas I. Roosevelt, his son-in-law by his first marriage) hastened back to the Capitol and took charge of its reconstruction in a more methodical and comprehensive way than any of his predecessors. He first made an inspection of the mined building and reported part of the walls and all the foundations sound and the more delicate work of the interior little injured although the incendiaries had labored all night to make the devastation complete, using powder, etc., of their rockets for that purpose. It was Latrobe who designed what Madison called the American order of architecture, using the cotton blossom, the tobacco leaf, and the Indian corn, shaft and ear, in his columns and capitals. He made a personal visit to the Catoctin and London hills to find quarries, and discovered the breccia or blue mottled marble which is used in the old hall of Representatives and in the corridors. The hall of Representatives, the Senate Chamber, the old Supreme Court Room, and the old lobbies, as well as the ground plan of the two wings, were Latrobe's work. He also erected St. John's Church, the Van Ness and Brentwood mansions, the arched gate of the Navy Yard, and was conferred with as to public buildings in many parts of the country. Latrobe had been on good terms with the commissioners fourteen





LADIES' RECEPTION ROOM, CAPITOL, WASHINGTON.



THE [illegible] OF [illegible]



years when President Monroe appointed a one-armed Virginia Colonel, Samuel S. Lane, with whom he soon came into collision, and he resigned in 1817. Removing to Baltimore he built the noted Cathedral there and a part of the Commercial Exchange. His son, Henry S. Latrobe, had been sent to New Orleans to build the water works in 1811 and died there in 1817. Following him upon the same errand, the architect of the Capitol met with the same fate September 3, 1820.

Mr. Latrobe has left behind him letters, compositions, constructions, and a posterity which will give him a permanent fame in the Republic. He was well acquainted with the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and German languages.

The fifth architect on the Capitol was Charles Bulfinch, the senior of Latrobe, who had been born in Boston, August 8, 1763, the son of a physician. He saw the battle of Bunker Hill from the housetops of the city, and graduated at Harvard in 1781. Finding life in a country house distasteful he made the tour of Europe to further his desire to be an architect, and returning to Boston—he married his cousin, Hannah Apthorp, and became at the same time a constructor, merchant, and selectman. It was he who laid out the streets and filled up the marshes of Boston, built the Boston State House, and was one of the partners to dispatch the ships *Columbia* and *Washington* to the Pacific Ocean whereby Captain Gray discovered the *Columbia River*. He twice failed in business, once by putting up Franklin Place, Boston, on too ambitious a scale, and again by the endeavor to fill up the Charles River marshes. His work is plentiful in Boston, as in the Court House and the North and South Churches. He also built the State House at Augusta, Me.

Bulfinch made the acquaintance of President-elect Monroe in 1816. At this time he was a lame man, having crippled himself for life by slipping on the steps of Faneuil Hall, and he was visiting Washington and other cities to obtain suggestions for a hospital for Boston. President Monroe renewed the





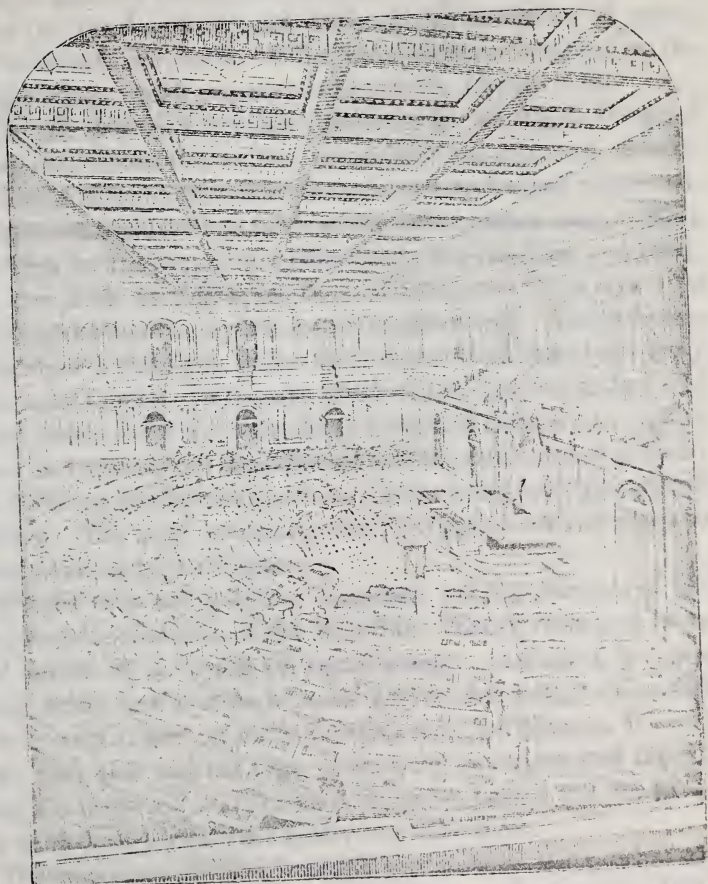
acquaintance while making a tour in the East subsequently, and was struck with the elegance of Bulfinch's buildings. The architect refused to take Latrobe's place until the latter had resigned absolutely, and then he proceeded to complete the wings on Latrobe's plan and to build the rotunda, old dome, and library, and to give area to the west front of the Capitol, which had been built too near the brow of the hill, by putting up the glacis and architectural terrace. In 1830 when the Capitol was virtually completed, Bulfinch resigned and returned to Boston, where he died April 15, 1844, at the age of eighty-one. He built two other buildings at Washington, the church for the Unitarian Society of which he was a member, and the old penitentiary at Greenleaf's Point, where the conspirators were imprisoned, tried, and hanged in 1865.

The criticism of Hadfield, already twice referred to, was written in 1819 in the period of Bulfinch. That artist throws some light upon the cost and style of the edifice. He begins by calling it "A very singular building," ascended by "uncouth stairs in the south wing." The plan of the Representatives Hall, he says, was taken from the remains of a theater near Athens as described by Stewart, an authority. It had gained "some advantage in appearance of form and costliness of materials" over the former hall, which was, however, more consistent, being all of native freestone. The capitals of the columns in this hall were executed in Italy" and are a copy from the capitals of the well-known remains of the lantern of Demosthenes at Athens. Had the entire columns been in Carrara marble they would have cost less money. Hadfield rebukes the coupling of the four center columns, the screen between the columns of the peristyle, the gallery door, and the principal entrance crowding each other, and the screen of columns on the south side of the hall, which "would be better among the ruins of Palmyra."

Such criticisms as Hadfield's lose their effect upon the public mind by their minuteness. The building stood for a quarter of a century complete as Bulfinch left it, and meantime



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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, CAPITOL.  
WASHINGTON.





persons of every quality from all parts of the world bestowed their encomiums upon it. For many years a contest raged about the difficulty of hearing in that ambitious domed, column-encircled Hall of Representatives, but no portion of the building is more admired to-day, and perhaps people of wisest censure prefer the involutions, quaint workmanship, economy of space, and classical simplicity of the old freestone building to the marble wings which are modeled upon the former plan.

The old Capitol, including the works of art which belonged there, cost about two million seven hundred thousand dollars. It covered considerably more than an acre and a half of ground. It was three hundred and fifty-two feet, four inches long, seventy feet high to the top of the balustrade, one hundred and forty-five feet high to the top of the old dome, and the wings were one hundred and twenty-one feet, six inches deep. These dimensions show a sufficient edifice for the period to have been truly a national Capitol. The part which the British burnt had cost about seven hundred and ninety thousand dollars; to restore those parts cost about six hundred and ninety thousand dollars; the freestone center cost about six hundred and ninety thousand dollars. The park enclosing this old Capitol contained about twenty-two and a half acres.

Within that old building happened all the contests of the first social civilization of the Republic. Every room and lobby and recess of it is full of reminiscence. Attempts are now being made on the score of architectural harmony to demolish it and erect a new center in keeping with the wings. We may hope that this will not take place until reverence and innovation, the historical and the artistic spirit, have a full debate on the subject in which the country can take sides.

The successor of Mr. Bulfinch was Robert Mills, who was appointed government architect by Andrew Jackson in 1830. He was a man of mediocre talents, whose opportunities allowed him to impress himself favorably upon the country. He was born in Charleston, S. C., and placed under the tuition of James Hoban in 1800, with whom he remained two years. Mr.



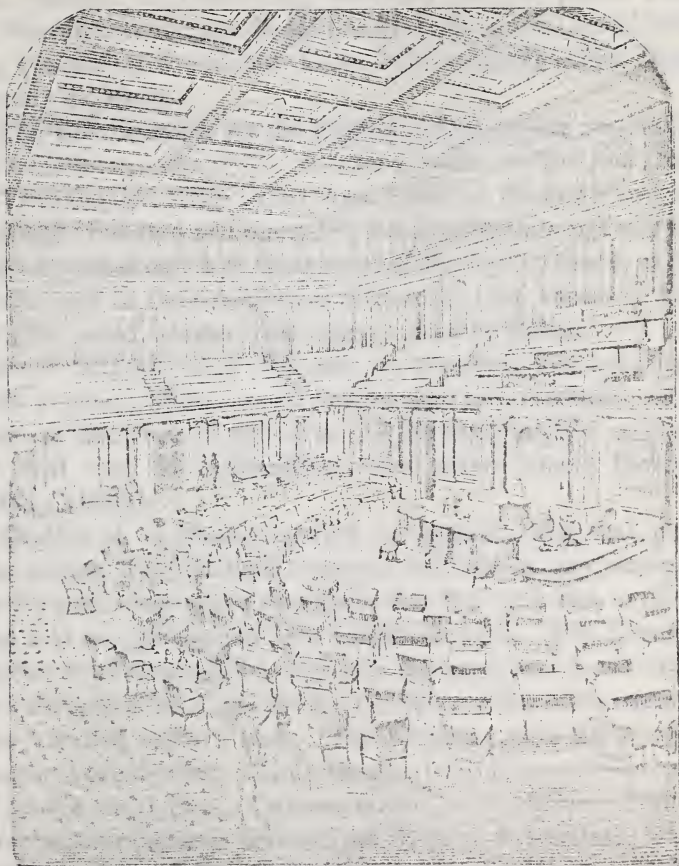
Jefferson introduced him to Latrobe. He had very extensive employment in the country, and constructed churches, public buildings, and mansions from Pennsylvania to Georgia; he built the second Treasury, of which the façade remains, and commenced the Patent Office and the general Post-Office, all three of which retain the impression of his style. He designed the Washington Monument, made a design for the Bunker Hill Monument, built the Monument Church at Richmond, the State Capitol at Harrisburgh, the Philadelphia Mint, and was the engineer of South Carolina when the Charleston and Hamburg Railroad was constructed between 1830 and 1834. Mr. Mills completed Bulfinch's work on the Capitol but got into a wrangle about the Patent Office which led to his removal. He long inhabited a tall brick house on New Jersey Avenue, Capitol Hill, and died in Washington, March 3, 1855. Mr. Mills had very little connection with the Capitol building, and for twenty years after its completion there was nothing more of architecture except a wrangle about the acoustics of the Hall of Congress.

New states were, however, admitted to the Union, and the increase of population in all the states multiplied Congressmen so that in 1850 it was determined to extend the old wings by greater wings named "extensions," to be constructed of more durable materials and upon the original plan. Proposals were invited and the fortunate architect was Thomas W. Walter.

He held and keeps the rank of the foremost classical architect in America. The corner-stone of the additions was laid by President Filmore, July 4, 1851, more than fifty-nine years after Washington laid the south-east corner stone of the old Capitol. Mr. Walter was born in Philadelphia, September 4, 1804, and was the son of a builder. In 1819 he entered the office of Mr. Strickland and, working with the trowel, supported himself and became a fair artist in colors. In 1830 he became an architect on his own account and the following year designed Moyamensing Prison. His plans for Girard College were accepted, and from 1833 to 1847 he superintended its construction, visiting Europe in 1838 to make studies for that institution.







SENATE CHAMBER, CAPITOL. WASHINGTON.





In 1843 the Venezuelan Government employed him to construct a mole and port at LaGuayra, and from 1851 to 1865 he was the architect of the Capitol and had an influence in the Treasury, Patent Office, and Post-Office extensions. Mr. Walter was accused of influencing contracts on the public works in Washington, and the disposition of funds on the Capitol building was mainly committed to an able engineer officer, Montgomery C. Meigs.

The first estimate for the Capitol extension was two million six hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars and five years time. In 1856 Captain Meigs called upon Jefferson Davis for two million eight hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars and said that the additional cost was on account of the low estimates of Mr. Walter and in the substitution of marble, iron, encaustic tiles, etc., for wood, plaster, and stone. And he added: "I have labored faithfully and diligently to construct this building in such a manner that it would last for ages as a creditable monument of the state of the arts at this time in this country." At that time the expenditure was about ninety thousand dollars monthly.

Captain M. C. Meigs reported in August, 1856, that above two million five hundred thousand dollars had been expended on the new wings up to that time, that the work had no debts, and that everything had been bought for cash. The Berkshire marble shafts, monoliths, cost one thousand four hundred dollars each, and the shafts for the corridors of the south basement two hundred dollars each. The following were the prices of marbles per cubic foot. Massachusetts, two dollars and fifty cents; Tennessee, six dollars; Vermont Green, seven dollars; Potomac Breccia, four dollars; Levant from Barbary, five dollars; Italian Statuary, seven dollars and ninety-five cents; Common Italian, two dollars and seventy-five cents. Meigs changed Walters' designs somewhat, putting in one hundred and ninety-two columns in all instead of two hundred and fifty-two. Bricks, from all cities, cost from five dollars and fifty cents to nine dollars and



twelve cents per thousand. To lay the bricks cost five dollars and eight cents per thousand.

The cost of the Capitol extension was about eight million dollars, of the new dome about one million two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and of the new library enough additional to make the entire cost upwards of ten million dollars. Works of art and ornaments made three hundred and fifty thousand dollars more. The extensions are about one hundred and forty-three by two hundred and thirty-nine feet each exclusive of porticoes. The whole Capitol has therefore cost about thirteen million dollars.







LOBBY OF SENATE, CAPITOL, WASHINGTON.



## CHAPTER VI.

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### THE LOBBY AND ITS GENTRY.

The word "Lobbyist," as any body might guess, is derived from the part of the Capitol where people go, who have objects to attain on the floors of Congress but not the right of access. In the Latin *lobby* signifies a covered portico-pit for walking, and in the Capitol at Washington the lobbies are long, lofty, and lighted corridors completely enclosing both halls of legislation. One of the four sides of this Lobby is guarded by door-keepers who can generally be seduced by good treatment or a *douceur* to admit people to its privacy, and in this darkened corridor the lobbyists call out their members and make their solicitations.

The lobby at Washington is referred to by the architect Latrobe as early as 1806. He explains that "The Lobby of the House is so separated from it that those who retire to it cannot see and probably will not distinctly hear what is going forward in it. This arrangement, he says, "has been made with the approbation of the President of the United States and also under the advice of the speakers of the two houses at the time when the designs were made. It is novel, but it is supposed that the inconveniences to which the Lobby now subjects the House will be thereby avoided."

This shows the high antiquity of the Washington Lobby.

I have no doubt that many of my readers may be asking themselves, what kind of a fellow is a lobbyist to look at?

A lobbyist is an operator upon his acquaintance, his wits, and his audacity. Your lobbyist may be an old man, whose experience, a *plomb*, suavity or venerableness may recommend



him. He may be a strong man in middle life, who commands what he is paid for doing by a knowledge of his own force and magnetism. He may be an adroit young man, full of hollow profession, who dexterously leads his victim along from terrace to terrace of sentimentality, until that dell is reached where the two men become confederates, and may whisper the truth to each other.

The average lobbyist must seem an agreeable man, whether he be so or no. He is seldom so foolish as to risk a quarrel for no end, and therefore a newspaper-writer can readily approach him and learn the news,—there being a tacit truce understood between them, by which the writer gets his news on the understanding that he will give trouble, in the way of revelations, to none less than the lobbyist's principals. The native lobbyist rather likes to read quick-witted accounts of such operations as he is about, and, if somebody in his own line other than himself, be described, enjoys the matter hugely.

I recollect, on one occasion, having it suggested to me that a sketch on the game of poker as played at Washington might incidentally trench upon a character of lobby influence not generally understood. The intimation that I received was, that certain prominent men in Congress and the government were very fond of the Western game of draw-poker; and that certain gentlemen in the Lobby, knowing this fact, humored the inclination, and played a losing game with the aforesaid dignitaries, in order that the acquaintance might be closer, and the legislative business in hand easy to approach. It is well established that, if you can deceive a man into believing that he has plundered you at cards, he feels under a sort of chivalric obligation; and hence a strong lobbyist will permit himself to lose heavily at the poker-table, under the assumption that the great Congressman who wins the stake will look leniently upon the little appropriation he means to ask for. As the appropriation is sure to be twenty-fold the loss at cards, it is plain that the loser really plays the best game at poker.

On this occasion, I went directly to a couple of fellows whom





I knew to be prime hands at the draw game, and stated to them that I could not play poker, and wanted to get an idea of it *sans* experience, and also some points with which to point my article. Both men entered into the spirit of the proposition, and while one sat down, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye, and gave me some inside information, the other slipped off and bought a book called "The American Hoyle," which he sent to me under the frank of the very member of Congress who was to be the subject of the article.

Amongst the lobbyists at Washington, is one very agreeable, well-behaved, and most learned man, who is on excellent terms with some of the most prominent of the judges, senators, etc., at the Capital. He formerly enjoyed the advantage of a partnership-at-law, and in a distant state was quite an influence in politics and at the bar. I believe that an unfortunate streak of luck came to him in the course of his practice, by which he was able, upon a speculation, involving some legislative proceedings, to make very much more money in a short space of time than he could do in a year or two by methodical practice. Whatever the cause, he slipped his moorings as a fair lawyer, and took to the legislature every winter, but never in support of any small matter. His propositions were all imperial, and to hear him talk you would think his ends were his country's, his God's, and truth's. He had a fine way of talking about "The equities," which he explained to be something superior in morals to mere points of law and evidence; and, with his fine grave face, suave manner, and enormous determination, he never failed to be respectable, and I always wondered how he ever could fail. Yet he always did fail, that is, he could inspire sufficient confidence in those who backed him with money to be kept at Washington from year to year at their expense, but his proposals were so preposterous in the amount asked, that nobody dared to vote for them.

On one occasion I was bound to New York, when this gentleman was discovered to have the adjacent berth to mine, and to be my companion in those agreeable hours one spends sitting



up until the berth shall be made, the lights put down, and the last passenger turned in. I was but imperfectly aware of his business at Washington, where he had always addressed me respectfully, and with a lazy man's privilege, I turned to him more unguardedly than on previous occasions, and soon found myself under the glamour of a very remarkable mind. He had spent much of his life in a distant part of the country, among associations interesting in themselves, and the grade of his acquaintances was high, and often eminent. He was President-making on this particular evening, and called my attention to the force, record, and consistency of some gentlemen whom I had never thought of in association with the Chief Magistracy. As he proceeded in his talk, I felt a luminous mind near me as truly as if I had been sitting under some shining orb. His literary tastes were just crude enough to be original and honest. His acquaintance with men was that of one who never took a suggestion but he gave one back like an equal. There was bearing in the man also, and that feeling of warm interest in my youth which had the effect to make me feel that there was something to pity in my associate. Without any clear knowledge that he had ever been wronged, I got to feel that his desert had been unequal to his aspiration, and imperceptibly the impression was made upon me that he had lost his grasp upon fortune by too much courage, rather than by the abandonment of his friends; for, like every man in the Lobby, as I afterwards found out, he placed much stress upon personal fidelity. You never find a genuine lobbyist but he makes it a point of honor that friendship is the last manly element to be given up, and I suppose that this is an approximate notion to that older relation we express when we say that there is honor among thieves. At Washington one hears much more of loyalty to one's friends than of loyalty to one's country. In fact, one would soon become unpopular in that promiscuous society by affecting any undue or juvenile consideration for his country. They expect John A. Bingham, or Daniel Voorhees, or some of the professional orators, to attend to that kind of sentiment exclusively.





Time ran on, and I discovered what my quondam companion of the sleeping-car was working his brain upon during the pending session. He had a fine scheme, based upon the nicest principles of equity, to take sixty million dollars out of the Treasury to refund the cotton tax. I have never been able to persuade myself that he did not believe he was engaged in a highly meritorious duty in seeking to have that cotton-tax taken out of the Treasury and refunded, because, as he expressed it, the Supreme Court had been equally divided on the subject, and would certainly have made a decision as he argued it, except that two unjudicial Justices had been added to the Bench to anticipate certain railway decisions, and were not to be relied upon when a fine point of law and honor came up. The sixty million dollars were not to be grossly shoveled out of the Treasury, for my friend was no such gross disturber of the revenues and the tax-scale. Like every other lobbyist, he preferred the pleasant form of a bonded restitution.

The Treasury was merely to listen to the courts, as the courts were merely to do justice to a war-ridden people. If the courts should be so lost to judicial integrity as to slip the matter over from term to term, he did not entertain the supposition that a Congress of his countrymen would be equally tardy in doing their duty. When this Congress had shown, in a chivalric way, its origin with the constituency, and its respect for law and "equity," by passing the little bill which he proposed, nothing else was necessary than for the Treasury to issue sixty million dollars of bonds, redeemable in forty years, with the proper coupons attached. Having your coupons attached, you, as a friend of the outraged planter, were merely to collect the interest annually; and here my friend was wont to stop and say, with a look which was as impressive as Chevalier Bayard's: "What is interest at seven per cent to a nation like ours, which owes so much to the cotton interest?"

You can see it all in a twinkling. The whole thing involved but four million or so per annum; while, meantime, with his three cents per pound on cotton refunded to him, the planter



would take new heart, believe again in the generosity of the country, put this annual amount into gins, seed, and labor, and push the country so far ahead that, when the bonds came due at the end of forty years, so far from anything being lost, there would only be a magnificent investment on all sides. It would bless him that gave and him that took.

If there could be such a thing in our days as a simple-minded man in Congress, it might not be hard to suppose that a scheme like this might carry conviction to his mind. But my friend, probably, had a less sentimental backing than this to his proposition. All that portion of the press, all those Congressmen, all the commercial interests, in the cotton area, were, perhaps, already driven up and prepared to vote for this job as a sectional issue; for he makes a great mistake who thinks we have got out of sectionalism by getting out of slavery. It was the cotton which made the sectionalism before fully as much as the slave; because the slave might grow anywhere, but the cotton would not. In this scheme, however, there was still another powerful interest lying back in the rear, and that was a combination of disinterested gentlemen who paid my friend's expenses in Washington, and had already secured nearly the whole sum to be restored from the Treasury, by obtaining the refusal of nearly all the said claims for the cotton which had been seized.

Although sixty million dollars were to be represented by the bonds which the Treasury were to issue, it might take but a few thousand dollars to get control of the bonds in anticipation of their issue. These few thousand dollars would, perhaps, come from some plethoric banker who was to be promised the negotiation of the bonds when the Treasury should put them out. In order to make everything fair, perhaps a stock company, with no capital to see, but plenty to talk about, had arranged to distribute stock in anticipation of the bonds, to redeem the stock with the bonds when they were at last printed, and perhaps the whole Confederacy was to be "taken in" somewhere between the passage of the bill and the insurance of the bonds.





Another of our sterling knights of the Lobby of Washington is the gentleman who is responsible for the great tunnel project.

This man is a Columbus, a Lesseps, and a De Witt Clinton of his kind. He is, I believe, a native of Prussia, and a fine-looking man, with Oriental features, a dark eye, excellent address, in despite of his German accent, and he is both an author, a pleader, and a diplomatist. Some say he is no engineer; but, if this be the case, he has performed an enormous amount of work as a mere assumer, which it would have been hard for a real professional mining engineer to do as well.

I made this gentleman's acquaintance the first year I came to Washington, while visiting, as I was in the habit of doing, Mr. Riley, clerk of the Mining Committee.

Mr. Riley had led a life of adventure; had edited a newspaper in British Columbia, and subsequently made a journey to the diamond fields of South Africa, to write a book for a Hartford publishing house. He died of cancer in the face before his book was completed.

One day while speaking to Mr. Riley, he called my attention to some large and beautiful albums filled with the richest photographs of Kings and Queens, works of art, fine architectures, and people prominent in literature, opera, and adventure, which could be collected in Europe. I had never seen, even in Europe, such a perfect and exquisite library of photographs, and they have been uniformly the admiration of all who have seen them. They were the property of the tunnel-maker. Adjacent to these photographic books was a magnificent collection of gems, minerals, etc., from the various mines of Europe. I was told by Mr. Riley, as a mark of confidence, that he would see to it that I should become possessed of a copy of an extraordinary book on mining which his great friend and collector was at that time publishing.

In due time this book came out, and it was, indeed, an expensive and entertaining work, and of a somewhat technical character.





The title of this work was, "The Comstock Lode, and the Evils of the Present System of Mining."

It began with a description of the Comstock Lode,—a mighty vein of gold and silver in the State of Nevada, which was discovered in the year 1869, and on which nearly forty companies owned claims. These companies had already produced the incredible sum of one hundred and thirty million dollars in bullion. The shafts into the lode had been sunk more than one thousand feet, so that, between the cost of labor, the interference of water, and the loss of power, the whole lode was in danger of abandonment. If abandoned, one hundred thousand people would be deprived of their occupation and means of subsistence! Such a calamity Providence had done its part to avert by raising the lode a thousand feet or more above the adjacent valley, which was thus manifestly designed to be used for the propulsion of a tunnel beneath the lode, which would at once draw off the water and carry off the ore by an inclined plane, and permit economical and vastly ramified mining for a hundred years to come. This tunnel, which would be called after its proposer, would have a length of twenty-one thousand feet, with shafts making the amount total forty-three thousand. The scheme had been already proposed to eminent "experts" in Europe, who forthwith came to the aid of the engineer with letters of indorsement, all duly printed in this beautiful volume. The mining companies working far above the lode had agreed to pay two dollars a ton for the ore which the great tunnel should carry out for them. The Tunnel was to have two substantial railroad tracks. Such tunnels had been built in Germany and elsewhere, as in the Hartz Mountains; and the engineer staked his reputation, and gave the whole tunnel, liberally, as security, that, if Congress would issue bonds and come to the aid of the work to the extent of five million dollars, fifty million dollars per annum of precious metal could be brought out, science would be benefited, the mineral domain would be filled with immigration, the burdens of the people in taxation would be reduced, and the national debt paid off!



Some years have passed since this book was placed in my hands, and every year the indefatigable engineer adds another tome, if possible more agreeable, more eloquent, and more convincing, in favor of the proposition. He has obtained some private credit, and has had sympathy among the miners, hundreds of whom have given parts of their work for nothing; while, in Congress, men like William D. Kelley, Gen. Banks, and Senator Nye, have made such speeches in his favor as Queen Isabel might have delivered before the King of Arragon in aid of Columbus. Every session of Congress finds the engineer in good apartments at Washington, patiently reasoning out the cause, showering his scorn upon those too blind to see and too selfish to help; and, in the face of the opposition of the most powerful Capital on the Pacific Coast, he has succeeded in getting two or three reports from the Mining and other Committees, indorsing his project. Horace Greeley committed the editorial columns of the New York Tribune to it. If never achieved, it has become one of the notorieties of the period.

There is a certain kind of nature in your fine old lobbyist, which grows tough and sturdy by opposition. In the amount of opposition, it avows that it finds at least the bitter half of the appreciation which belongs to it. This tunnel, however, has not risen above the usual cares of such popular propositions, and the handsome shares of stock of the Tunnel Company, which represent the golden meed of victory, if ever that time comes, are not uncommon on the streets of the Federal City.

But, "Pshaw!" says your fine old lobbyist, "what is there wrong about our stock? What is our property we have a right to divide, as we are a chartered institution under the laws."

The great banking institution which is fighting the tunnel proposition has, however, its own suggestion for the development of the country and decrease of taxation on a scale scarcely less extraordinary, in the matter of irrigation.

While our engineering friend wants to take all the water out of the Comstock lode, the quartz company and bank which oppose him want to flood all the San Joaquin Valley with





water, and redeem an empire from the drought. They have had engineers from India to demonstrate the entire feasibility of the project, and I believe that their bill passed Congress near the close of the session, sustained, as it was, by all the powerful influences which resist the scheme of the tunnel.

What will become of us if the great tunnel and the great irrigating scheme combine and drench all the Pacific Coast with the water pumped out of the lode? If both the schemes be successful, our heads will fly off; and, if both fail, where will be our pockets?

The next of our exalted lobbyists is the gentleman who watches the claims for French spoliation. He advertises with the regularity of the original Jacobs, whenever the prospect revives for paying these seventy-year-old losses. Does the Alabama Treaty arrange to pay losses inflicted by British slavery-corsairs? So much more the reason for beginning in the right way with the wrongs of our grandfathers! Is there a Venezuelan claim commission prepared? Then why do we expect other governments to deal restitution to us who began with swindling our countrymen during the French republican wars? We think our gifted friend deceased sometimes; like Mr. Hood's infant;

We thought him dying when he slept,  
And sleeping when he died;

for, after we have ceased to regret him, hard as his loss has been, up turns that familiar advertisement in the Washington journals:

"The French claims agency. In uninterrupted existence for forty-five years. Justice is to be done to us at last, friends! I have never doubted the integrity of the United States Government, if the matter were pressed steadily upon its attention. The prospects at the present time are light almost unto the perfect day. Send us the name of your grandfather's stepfather. If the middle name is remembered, please put it in; otherwise no matter, for we shall be sure to know all about it. We keep a list of ships, captains, breadth of beam and keel,



and damages at compound interest. Broken hearts, assuage your tears! All will be well by addressing Brobiggan, post-office box 41,144."

What kind of looking man is this French claim agent? I often wondered! Is he the son or grandson of himself, having inherited the business in direct line, or is he like "Pecksniff, architect," possessed of the designs of Chuzzlewit, merely a clerk of the original Jacobs, who has wormed into the scheme or purchased it for the heirs? If he be himself, the same in memory, faith, and perseverance, the same stalwart old-bunker of the Lobby whom Benton fought, and who stood with fortitude the thunder of Silas Wright, let him come forward and give us a specimen hair from his brave old wig. Let him organize the third house and make it regular; for late Congresses have not even been dignified Lobbies.

Do I see amongst these great knights of the Lobby my old friend who wishes a self-respecting government to behave itself at once, neglect the great considerations of empire no longer, and rebuild the levees of the mighty Mississippi? I do! His honest face shines with its wonted fires. He is a little deaf on one side; but it does not affect the sonorousness of his elocution, nor make him swerve one hair from his intent. He fought in the Confederate Army, but he laid down his arms like a man. He knew when he was whipped. From that day to this, he has accepted the arrangement of bunting as we tendered it to him upon the end of a pole. He kneels to the judgment of Heaven and the comities of time. Yes, he will take something, as in former days.

We see him wipe his magnificent brow, and grow slightly more pronounced in the Southern foreshortenings and inflections. We see his forefinger extended, and that oath which has done more service on great occasions than the involuntary prayer come forth with the rare intensity of a low whisper.

When he sees the alluvial of his country running by the thousands of tons into the Gulf of Mexico,—the richest soil under the providence of Heaven, with capacity for several





nations to the square acre,—to build up Cuba and that foreign archipelago which is merely the delta of the Mississippi.

Stop! says he, “are not the West Indies of volcanic formation?”

Volcanic, of course! That’s where the wrong and devastation lie. Left to their volcanic selves, they would be barren as the burning marl; but it is *our* alluvial which clothes them green and makes them teem with sugar, indigo, and tobacker. Yes, he will have some Havanny tobacker, though he despises the fatality which produces it.

And my lobby friend, with unfailing resources, spirits, and individualism, unfolds again his olden tale. A few thousand miles of embankment, at a few thousand dollars a mile, will narrow the Mississippi and each of its arteries, and correspondingly deepen them. Hence you save all that you spend for improving rivers; you make every great river navigable the year round; you can build railroads on your levees. And, instead of five million bales of cotton you make fifteen million. Mark this, and wonder at the blindness of human governments! Do you spend the Treasury’s money to accomplish such a result? Oh, no! You give merely that useless credit which blesses him that gives and him that takes; you give merely the indorsement of the United States to the bonds of a Levee Company, which relieves the Federal government from the jealousy of the states in undertaking local work. The Levee Corporation accomplishes its object, collects taxes on all staples raised on the redeemed territory, meets the interest on the bonds, and pays the principal when they fall due in twenty years. Oh, Chiralrickards!

Do you still harp on your state rights, and prefer to be taxed by a construction company instead of by your government? Show me that stock with which your pockets are filled! Whose image and superscription is it? If men would render frankly unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s how much less would they have to render unto God!





## CHAPTER VII.

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### A RUNNING HISTORY OF GOVERNMENT SCANDAL.

LEST we might be discouraged in our day by the presumption that we live in the only dishonest period of the Government, it will be a duty of solace rather than of scandal to show that a percentage of evil has always been present in the public councils and that episodes of impurity and treachery in the administration have been sufficiently frequent to excite the gravest apprehensions and indignations of their day.

In every case, however, the public sentiment in reserve has been strong enough to wash out the stain. Our first scandals referred to speculations in the public lands and the public funds.

The State of Georgia was the first to inaugurate a land swindle in 1789. It sold out to these private companies pre-emption rights to tracts of land; these companies were called the South Carolina Yazoo, the Virginia Yazoo, and the Tennessee Yazoo; the whole amount of land disposed of was fifteen and a half millions acres, and the sum agreed to be paid was upwards of two hundred thousand dollars. Subsequently the same lands were sold to other companies because the first purchasers insisted upon making their payments in depreciated Georgia paper. Hence arose the controversy on the celebrated Yazoo claims, so-called.

1798. This year is notable in the chronicles of Congress for the first scandalous breach of decorum that was ever witnessed in that body. It occurred in the lower House during the balloting for managers to conduct the impeachment of Blount, and the chief parties to it were Roger Griswold of Connecticut and Mathew Lyon of Vermont. A number of the



members had collected about the bar of the House, and among them was Lyon, who in loud tones indulged in abuse of the Connecticut members for their course with reference to a measure that had just before been under discussion, declaring that he entertained a serious notion of moving into Connecticut for the purpose of fighting them on their own ground. Griswold retorted by saying "If you come, Mr. Lyon, I suppose you will wear your wooden sword!" in allusion to Lyon's having been cashiered and to a rumor that he had been drummed out of the army while compelled to wear a wooden sword. At this Lyon spat in his face, for which he was about to be subjected to bodily punishment by Griswold when friends interposed and prevented it. Immediately the Speaker, who had previously quitted the chair, resumed it and stated the facts to the House which resulted in a motion for Lyon's expulsion. This motion being referred to a committee of privileges, the latter quickly reported a resolution for expulsion accompanied by a full statement of the facts. But Lyon's Democratic friends obstinately opposing the resolution it was only by a majority of five votes that the House proceeded to consider the subject in Committee of the Whole; and then, not content with the report already made, required that the witnesses should again testify. Lyon in a speech against the resolution jeopardized his defense by using a vulgar and indecent expression which became the basis of a fresh charge. One of the witnesses who had testified to the fact that Lyon had been cashiered was Senator Chipman of his own State. Lyon stated in his speech, by way of rebuttal, that he had once chastised Chipman for an insult, which drew from the latter a full account of the affair, placing Lyon in an unenviable position. After one ineffectual effort on the part of the opposition, who were unwilling to lose even one vote, to substitute a reprimand for expulsion, the resolution was lost. This unsatisfactory termination of the action of the House, intensifying instead of allaying the resentment of Griswold, he determined himself to punish Lyon. Upon the occasion of his first appearance in the House after the decision Lyon was reading





in his seat when Griswold approached and commenced beating him on the head with a cane. Lyon arose in defense of himself, and a struggle of some minutes duration ensued in which he rushed to the fire-place and seized the tongs but was felled to the floor by Griswold who closed with and continued beating him until they were separated by the friends of the vanquished Democrat. The House being now called to order, there was a demand made for the expulsion of both Griswold and Lyon, but the resolution offered for that purpose was defeated.

Lyon is further notorious as being the first to suffer penalty under the Sedition Law then recently passed. A principal charge against him was that he wrote a letter which was published in a Vermont paper, stating that with the President "every consideration of the public welfare was swallowed up in a continual grasp for power, an unbounded thirst for ridiculous pomp, foolish adulation, and selfish avarice," etc. He was convicted and sentenced to four months imprisonment and to pay a fine of one thousand dollars. During his imprisonment he was re-elected to Congress, and, after serving out the term of his sentence he appeared in the House and took his seat, whereupon a resolution for his expulsion was offered, the causes alleged being "that he had been convicted of being a malicious and seditious person, of a depraved mind and wicked and diabolical disposition, guilty of publishing libels against the President, with design to bring the Government of the United States into contempt." But this resolution also was defeated, although it received a bare majority vote, and Lyon kept his seat.

The house, during the session of 1798, refused to pass a resolution previously adopted in the senate to authorize Thomas Pinckney to receive certain presents which in accordance with custom had been tendered him by the courts of Madrid and London at the close of his missions thither, and which he had refused to accept because of the constitutional provision relating to presents from foreign powers. The resolution was rejected on grounds of public policy as was afterwards declared by unanimous vote of the house.



The seat of government was removed to Washington in 1800, but it had been established here only a short time when the building used as the War Office was burned and many valuable papers were destroyed. Within a few months after this occurrence the Treasury building took fire, and although important documents were lost the damage was not so great as in the former case. The violence of party feeling which characterized the times, imputed these occurrences to the design of public officers in seeking to destroy the evidence of their deficiencies.

1804. The Federal Judge of the District Court of New Hampshire was this year tried on an impeachment during the previous Congress for willfully sacrificing the rights of the government in a case tried before him, and for drunkenness and profanity on the bench. He did not appear at the trial before the Senate, but a petition was received from his son representing that the Judge was insane and praying to be heard by counsel. Against some opposition the prayer was granted and testimony was offered tending to prove the fact of his insanity. To this it was answered that his insanity, if it existed, was the result of habitual drunkenness, and the impeachment was sustained.

1804. The impeachment of Judge Chase of the Supreme Court followed closely upon the above and was the work of the Jeffersonians who were in a majority in the house. Chase was a Federalist and had made himself extremely obnoxious to his political opponents by including in his charges to the grand juries of his circuit political dissertations. In one of these he had condemned the action of Congress in repealing a late Judiciary Act, had depreciated the change in the constitution of Maryland dispensing with the property qualification of voters, and had dwelt with some emphasis upon certain proposed changes in state laws which he considered pernicious. His ability made him an object of fear to his opponents hardly less than his obnoxious doctrines subjected him to their hatred, and they determined to make this an instance of popular vengeance.





On motion of John Randolph a committee of investigation was appointed for the purpose of inquiring into his official conduct, but they were compelled to turn back five years into his record before they could discover much against him which would offer a semblance of justification for his impeachment, and they finally concluded to present his action in the Callender and Fries cases as affording the least defensible points in his judicial administration. He was accordingly impeached and preparations were made to prosecute him at the next session. The articles of impeachment were eight in number. In addition to those founded on his conduct in the cases named, two articles were based on his charge to the grand jury referred to. A month was given to the Judge to prepare his defense. It was a remarkable scene when the case came to trial. The Vice-President, Burr, was under indictment for murder and red with the blood of Hamilton, while the man impeached was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, sixteen years a judge, and pure and venerable. Luther Martin, a drunken genius and a Federalist, made a wonderful speech for Chase, and he was acquitted on a majority of the articles while in no case were two-thirds of the votes cast for his conviction. John Randolph played Ben. Butler in this trial and wanted judges made removable by joint resolution. He even opposed paying Chase's witnesses, an act so like Butler's at a later day as to arouse a smile in the reader.

In 1805, Mr. Dallas, father of the subsequent Vice-President, was unofficially charged with having pocketed six thousand five hundred and ninety-eight dollars, for three months services as state paymaster during the whisky insurrection.

In 1806, the Federalists charged Jefferson's administration with voting two million dollars in secret session to bribe France to compel Spain to come to some reasonable arrangement as to the boundaries of Louisiana.

In the same year, 1806, a draft was found amongst the effects of a Kentucky merchant tending to show that Judge Sebastian had been a pensioner of Spain. The same was charged against





General James Wilkinson, Commander-in-Chief of the American Army. About this time Aaron Burr conceived his scheme of fillibustering in the Spanish Colonies, which has led to a very gaseous romance in our history. Burr's whole career shows that he was a sensationalist with little ballast of character or mind. Wilkinson was a military genius without sincerity, and he was court-martialed twice, and vindicated by his talents rather than by the facts. John Randolph was challenged by Wilkinson in 1808, and John Smith, a senator from Ohio, was set apart for expulsion by John Quincy Adams on the charge of complicity with Burr's treason, but a majority only voted to expel.

In 1809, an intricate and prolonged judicial and congressional process arose out of a claim by Edward Livingstone of Louisiana,—who had been a defaulter as Jefferson's District Attorney of New York,—for reclaimed lands known as the Batture in front of New Orleans. Livingstone bought the Batture, conditional upon his recovering it by suit from the city. The court of final resort decided that it was his and he paid ninety thousand dollars for it, but the citizens combined against him and dispossessed him. Jefferson believed that he was an unprincipled speculator, and the militia were paraded and the dikes on the property broken down. Livingstone sued the marshal who had dispossessed him and sued also Mr. Jefferson. The Supreme Court at Washington put Livingstone in possession and after indefatigable exertions he got the property only to find that his title was defective; but he compromised with the other claimants so that the fourth which he obtained netted him a handsome fortune.

We have omitted in this sketch any reference to Albert Gallatin and Mr. Breckenridge, both men of national reputation who were in much responsible for the whisky insurrection in western Pennsylvania. Gallatin was a Swiss who became a United States Senator, Secretary of the Treasury, and Minister to Russia,—one of the most remarkable men we have produced



who lived to be more than four-score and had the greatness to decline offices greater than he had ever filled.

In 1809, prolonged litigation and scandal arose over the case of the British Sloop "Active" which had been seized by her American crew and taken by a Pennsylvania State cruiser. Connecticut men seized her and Pennsylvanians recaptured her. A Pennsylvania Judge, despite an injunction from a Congressional Committee, ordered the prize to be sold. Congress reversed the decision of the State Court, but Rittenhouse, the Pennsylvania Treasurer, held as indemnity against his personal bond the certificates of federal debt in which the prize money had been invested. His estate was sued by a subsequent State Treasurer. This led to a conflict between militia acting for the general government and for the state. The government triumphed, and punished the resisters.

It was in 1810 that Congress set apart one day in the week for private bills.

In 1811, the charter of the Bank of the United States expired, and the offer of a bonus of one million and a quarter failed to secure a renewal.

In 1812, John Henry, an Irish adventurer, naturalized, brought on a great scandal by accepting a commission to detach the New England States from the Union, and then receiving fifty thousand dollars from President Madison.

In 1813, Clay and Calhoun united in a successful effort to expel newspaper reporters from the floor, where they had long been sitting, to the gallery where they could hear nothing.

In 1814 the Yazoo claims were settled by the issue of scrip to the amount of eight million dollars to the claimants, most of the money going to a set of sharks who had bought the claims for a trifle.

In 1815, Dallas's scheme for a National Bank with thirty-five million dollars capital was adopted. Calhoun carried it through the house. The next year three hundred and fifty thousand dollars was voted to the Cumberland Road, the system of fortifications was provided for and the first public buildings





outside of Washington were resolved upon. Congress also voted itself one thousand five hundred dollars a year per man in place of six dollars a day, and in the same session a pre-emption right for settlers on the public lands was adopted.

When the books were opened for the Second United States Bank twenty-five million dollars was subscribed, and three million dollars more were taken by Stephen Girard who huckstered it out to other bankers. Branches were established from the present bank in Philadelphia, at Boston, New York, Baltimore, Portsmouth, Providence, Middletown, Washington, Richmond, Charleston, Norfolk, Savannah, Lexington, New Orleans, Cincinnati, Louisville, Chillicothe, Pittsburg, Fayetteville, and Augusta. At that time the public debt was one hundred and five million dollars and the revenue forty-seven million dollars. Jefferson vetoed the bill making the bank pay a bonus of one million five hundred thousand dollars, as well as all dividends upon the public stock which it held for internal improvements. The bank grew corrupt almost immediately, and the State of Ohio refused to pay the tax upon its two branches. This Bank was a source of annoyance, scandal, and corruption until President Jackson finally closed it out. Amos Kendall's biographer summed up the subsequent history of that Bank in 1873:

"Despairing of a recharter from congress, the Bank purchased an act of incorporation from the Pennsylvania Legislature, and still carried on its operations under the name of the Bank of the United States. In common with the other State Banks it stopped payment in 1837, and never resumed. Though declaring its entire individual ability, it discouraged a general return to specie payments to the last, and when the other banks could no longer be restrained it threw off the mask and exposed its insolvency. Its entire capital of thirty-five millions of dollars was dissipated and lost. Such a record as its books exhibited of loans to insolvent political men, evidently without expectation of repayment, of debts due by that class of men charged to profit and loss, of loans to editors and reckless spec-



ulators, and of expenditures for political electioneering and corrupt purposes, was never before exhibited in a Christian land. The ambitious author of all this ruin, who had aspired with the aid of his political allies to govern the government of the United States, and through his cotton speculations control the exchanges of the commercial world, and had been carried on men's shoulders as a sort of demi-god, had resigned the Presidency of the Bank and retired to a private life, where he died miserably with the disease which consumed Herod of old."

Mr. Horace Clarke of New York, exposed in the winter of 1872, a plot against him, the principal figure in which was a Committee Clerk named Cowlam. Mr. Negley, of Pittsburgh, introduced a resolution in the House, which had been preceded by alarming telegraphic despatches from Cowlam to Clarke, to this effect: "Honorable Clarke! I do not know you! Hence the startling information I give you is the warning counsel of an honorable friend and the secretary of Benjamin Butler. An attempt is to be made to pizen you. A dreadful conspiracy is planned. 'Thrice the brindled cat hath mewed.' Bewair!"

To this, Clarke responded characteristically with an essay several reams long, breathing an essence of a gentleman, a statesman, sweet bread and peas.

Another telegraph-despatch rejoined from Cowlam. The conspiracy was the most dreadful known since the days of Guy Fawkes, and headed by resolute and extraordinary men. One of these gigantic freebooters was to rise in Congress and point the way to the booty, and all the rest were to fill the breach. "Be warned," says Cowlam, "for my intentions never were sinister, since I am the secretary of Benjamin Butler."

A lawyer was sent down by the Owl Line, and he called on Cowlam. For this disinterested savior of the Union Pacific Road, he saw a youth of a freckled physiognomy, with eyes which sparkled at the rattle of pennies, and whiskers blown out from his chops, as if at the vigor of his own windiness. This was the rescuer of the corporation; and he pointed out, after much mystery, the dangerous authority who was to have





mounted the barricades. It was Negley, calmly arranging his hair at a glass.

The lawyer at once stuck Cowlam's correspondence in the hands of the immaculate Jim Brooks. When Negley mounted the breach, Jim Brooks appeared at the sally-port, and presented the veracious Cowlam correspondence. Negley fell into the moat, Cowlam disappeared by volatile evaporation, and Jim Brooks slapped his hand over his pocket, and exclaimed:

"The honor of congress has been maintained by me to the extent of deserving fifty more shares of Mobilier for my dear little son-in-law!"

An enormous amount of forgery, lobbying, bribery, and litigation has taken place over land claimed under Spanish, French, and Mexican titles. Each of these claims has been in the nature of a romance. The Bastrop claim was the pretext of Aaron Burr's descent of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The Limantour claim, so called from a very noble appearing old French gentleman named José Yves Limantour who prosecuted it, is described below.

Real Estate valued in California which had continually increased since the acquisition of that State were among other causes depressed between 1854 and 1858 by the uncertainty of land titles resulting from the numerous and fraudulent claims set up to property that had been purchased in good faith and long held by its occupants. Of these claims the most distinguished for audacity and extravagance were those of José Yves Limantour, by birth a Frenchman. His claims included four square leagues of land on the San Francisco Peninsula, embracing about half of the most valuable part of that city, Alcatraz and Yerba Buena Islands and the Farralores together with lands in other parts of the state—in all about a hundred square leagues, and he asserted his right to the same on the ground of a grant made to him by Governor Micheltorena in payment for merchandise and money advanced by him to the latter ten years before. The Board of Land Commissioners created by act of Congress in 1851 having confirmed his claims; an appeal was





taken to the United States District Court, and the following quotation from the opinion of the Judge rendered in 1858 discloses the enormity of the fraud and the means resorted to for its accomplishment:

“Whether we consider the enormous extent or the extraordinary character of the alleged concessions to Limantour, the official positions and the distinguished antecedents of the principal witnesses who have testified in support of them, or the conclusive and unanswerable proofs by which their falsehood has been exposed—whether we consider the unscrupulous and pertinacious obstinacy with which the claims now before the court have been persisted in—although six others presented to the Board have long since been abandoned—or the large sums extorted from property-owners in this city as the price of the relinquishment of these fraudulent pretensions; or, finally, the conclusive and irresistible proofs by which the perjuries by which they have been attempted to be maintained have been exposed, and their true character demonstrated, it may safely be affirmed that these cases are without a parallel in the judicial history of the country.”

Before its conquest by the United States a very considerable portion of the best agricultural lands in California had been granted to individuals by the Mexican Government, and the boundaries of these grants had been loosely described. By the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo the United States agreed not to disturb the titles so vested, but the greatest difficulty has been encountered in ascertaining the extent and limitations of such grants. This in part explains the uncertainty of land titles which has occasioned so much confusion and annoyance and which has been the source of a large proportion of the fraud and litigation that has characterized the history of that state. No sooner had the motley crowd of adventurers who had congregated from all parts of the world upon the shores of California, discovered the nature and uncertainty of the title to the lands there than forthwith sprang up from among them a host of claimants and counter-claimants under alleged Spanish and



Mexican grants, bearing aloft in their hands the forged documents, covered by a superabundance of seals, to which they pointed as evidence of their rights. About eight hundred claims were presented to the Board of Commissioners provided for the emergency, half of which number they confirmed and the other half they rejected for manifest fraud and informality. Nineteen thousand one hundred and forty-eight square miles, was the area of land covered by these claims. On appeal to the district courts many of those rejected by the Board were allowed and some that had received the sanction of the Board were disallowed. Even now on the docket of the Supreme Court of the United States this business is well represented, and so far from being settled it yet affords employment and lucrative pay to our army of attorneys and clerks. The General Law Office has done a goodly share of the labor involved, but it has marked against it this passage quoted from Tuthill's history of California: "It was a grievance loudly complained of, that an appeal from the survey made necessary a journey to Washington to watch proceedings under a subordinate of the Land Office, and many a disappointed claimant has come home, alleging that the party which accommodated the clerk with the largest loan won the decision."

During Pierce's administration the Clerk of the Congressional Committee of claims, Abel R. Corbin, was detected and exposed in the act of black-mailing some merchants of Boston under the pretense of saving them taxation. He was paid one thousand dollars but the disclosure lost him his clerkship. A special report of a blistering nature was made on the case by Hon. Benjamin P. Stanton. Corbin had been brought to Washington by Senator Benton, whose organ he had edited at St. Louis. After his exposure he removed to New York; with means obtained from his first wife, who was much his senior, he acquired a moderate fortune by speculation. Years after his humiliation at Washington he contrived to marry a maiden sister of President Grant, and it was he who devised the scheme of selling a house which he owned to the admirers of his brother-





in-law. The house passed out of Corbin's hands into Grant's and was again sold to one Bowen who was induced to surrender it by the promise of controlling the local offices of the District of Columbia; a new set of admirers again purchased the same dwelling for Gen. Sherman. Corbin went into a desperate speculation with Fisk, Gould, Smith, and other unscrupulous gamblers, on the memorable "black Friday" of 1869. Attention was then called to his previous history and I recovered Stanton's report from the Document room and printed it simultaneously in Chicago and New York.



## CHAPTER VIII.

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### NOTABLE TOWN-CHARACTERS IN WASHINGTON.

The Capitol of a great nation will inevitably draw to it persons of quaint idiosyncracies. Amongst the celebrated men and women who have flourished in the city, Lorenzo Dow and his wife Peggy may be mentioned. Dow died in Washington and was buried on Fourteenth Street in the northern part of the town. Ann Royall was another singular being who published abusive books and papers from her nest, on Capitol Hill. Many aged claimants and people with grievances have worried out their days around the Capitol. Inventors and people with ambitious schemes will continue as in all ages to besiege their government at its place of residence, and some of these become chronic afflictions.

Amongst the three or four thousand Washington clerks recorded in the Blue Book of the United States is that of Charles L. Alexander, inscribed in the book of 1867 as a clerk in the sixth Auditor's office, but better known in the former Agricultural Bureau of the Interior Department. He has, or had, a brother also in the government service, and several years ago their father was favorably, yet painfully known, to many people in Washington, as passing by the title of "the Earl of Stirling and Hereditary Lieutenant of her Majesty in the Provinces of Nova Scotia, including New Brunswick and Upper and Lower Canada," and as having suffered and struggled much between the peerage and the gaol, between conscious right and imputed crime. The old man passed away in the sad satisfaction of having done and lost his best to establish the honor of his name and the estate of his children. These latter are still zealously at work, one in England and one here,



searching the libraries and the old book-stalls and explaining law and genealogy; and the subject of our notice amongst us is now turning gray, as much with this inherited responsibility as with years. Dependent upon this government salary, he is still frequently seen at the library of Congress, prying into the "Force Collection" in the infinitesimal hope that there the lost link may have been hidden away. He says that his race have been treated badly; that his father never had a charitable hearing; and that while he is translating and compiling in growing age for the price of bread, his immense property is the spoil of squatters and irreconcilable relatives. This is no delusion of this man; it is an inherited lawsuit, complete in every proof and paper, save only that a Scottish court, after one of the most remarkable trials in history, pronounced a part of the papers to be forged, while they exonerated his father. But had you or I succeeded to this monument of evidence, impregnated with our father's faith, we should have had thrice the presumption of its validity that we may have already by examining it. Of all the stories of lost heirs it is the most persuasive.

To begin this case where it starts itself:

In 1621 King James I. granted to one of his courtiers and Privy Councillors, Sir William Alexander, the territory of Nova Scotia, and in 1628 Charles I. added thereto the whole of Canada, soon after, also, raising him to the peerage by the title of "Viscount Canada and Earl of Stirling," and the same to descend to his *heirs male*. Five Earls of Stirling existed in all, and the fifth one, dying without issue, in 1739, left the title "dormant," until, in 1759, Mr. William Alexander, Surveyor General of the State of New Jersey, appeared, and petitioned the sovereign for the recognition of his honors. The same was disallowed by a committee of the House of Lords; but many of the better English noblemen conceded it, and he always passed as the Earl of Stirling down to the day of his death, which occurred at Albany, in 1783. He was the celebrated General Lord Stirling of our Revolutionary War, and ancestor, through a daughter of the Duer family, of New York.





He commanded at one time or another, nearly every American brigade in the Revolution, carried a wardrobe of four hundred and twelve garments, among them fifteen night-caps, fifty-eight vests, and one hundred and nineteen pairs of hose, and once, when he shot a deserter, the latter, looking to Heaven, cried, "Oh! Lord, have mercy on me!" "No, you scoundrel!" cried Stirling, "I won't have any mercy on you whatever!" Stirling established iron works, achieved distinction, and died rich, and his descendants, satisfied with their republican inheritance, have never troubled themselves about the Scottish earldom and estate. After General Alexander was rebuffed by Parliament, in 1762, the title again lay dormant for fifty-three years, when in 1815, an entirely new claimant appeared, to the consternation of the Scottish Chiefs.

This was Alexander Humphreys, the grandson of a Presbyterian minister at Dublin, Ireland, named John Alexander, and the son of a rich merchant of Birmingham, who had married the above clergyman's daughter. In one of the brief periods of peace between England and Napoleon, this Alexander Humphreys visited France with his father, when, war suddenly recommencing, both were seized and detained twelve years. The father died in exile; the mother in his absence; the son reappeared in England in 1814, thirty years of age, with a foreign wife, the mother of these American clerks. He became a school teacher at Worcester, and afterward proprietor of the school, and was much of the time in straitened circumstances. But while in exile a mysterious and supernatural communication had been made to him by a fortune-teller, one Mademoiselle Le Normand, the friend of his wife,—that he was the heir to great honors and vast estates, which he should secure after many toils and sufferings.

The theory of his most charitable opponents was built upon the gigantic presumption that this woman, Le Normand, and others had prepared voluminous forgeries in the French, Latin, and early English manuscripts, with the intention of connect-



ing Humphreys with the dormant peerage of Stirling, and that he had been their dupe for twenty-seven years!

Such conspirators would require the possession of immense and ubiquitous skill and intelligence; a knowledge of the shifting histories of the Canadas and Nova Scotia, and of all their forms of law, of Scottish jurisprudence and genealogy, of various penmanships, seals, and heraldries, and the entire science and symbolism of a peculiar province and its various eras. Yet it is undoubtedly true that this presumed Earl of Stirling received during a long period of years, by mysterious posts and expresses, by silent messengers, and by the agency of obscure peasants in Ireland and elsewhere, a new document in every emergency, now a map, and now a genealogical tree, and now a new writ or patent; and these seem to have been rivalled by the number of real documents bearing in his favor, collected by his learned lawyers in Canada and America; for among his suppositions was that when the American General Stirling presented his claims to this peerage, parties in his interest stole and scattered the papers of the future (present) and legitimate claimant, and that many of them were conveyed to America.

However this may be, the new claimant enlisted in his favor, as attorney and agent, Mr. Thomas Christopher Banks, the author of a book upon dormant and extinct peerages (who died in 1859, at the age of ninety years), by whose suggestion he took his mother's name of Alexander, and in 1825 he appeared at an election of Scottish Representative Peers, and actually voted as the Earl of Stirling. The following year he instituted legal proceedings in Scotland to be declared heir to his MOTHER, and entered papers, proving the existence of a charter of *Novodamus*. This charter was alleged to be a second charter issued to the original Earl of Stirling, admitting not only his male but his FEMALE heirs to inherit his title and estates,—for the present claimant, inheriting only from his mother, might have proved his descent, and still been no Earl of Stirling, had the males only inherited. To find this charter in the





archives of Canada, Banks was despatched thither, and soon reported important discoveries. The claimant meantime retired to Worcester, engaged in correspondence with all parts of the world relative to his pretensions, and on the strength of his claim (one hundred million acres of land), received thirteen thousand pounds upon bonds granted by him for fifty thousand pounds.

According to the Scottish law, a right of succession in pedigree can be obtained before a Sheriff's inquest, if there be no opponent claiming in precisely the same character; and availing himself of this, Humphreys was declared in 1830 the great-great-great-grandson of William, first Earl of Stirling. Soon afterward he was declared heir to the great American possessions of the same Earl, and he formally communicated the fact to the public authorities of British America in terms almost befitting a sovereign newly restored to his dominions.

This was the hey-day time of the new Earl, who seems throughout to have been a benignant, dignified, noble man, whether nobleman or not. He moved from Worcester, where he had been dunned by butchers and tradesmen, to fashionable quarters in London, and he opened an office under the eaves of the Parliament House, where he issued advertisements for the sale of territories in Canada and debentures on his American possessions. *Eclat* attended him and sympathy; he preserved all the friendships of his youth, and the energy with which he pressed his rights in the peerage was demonstrated by his twice voting at Holyrood in elections, though under protest, by his creating Baronets of Nova Scotia, and by his petition, when Victoria was crowned, to do homage as hereditary Lieutenant of Nova Scotia. He also forwarded, in 1838, a solemn protest to the English Prime Minister against appointing the Earl of Durham Governor-General of Canada.

The novelty and daring of these measures aroused the jealousy of the Scottish Peers, and the Crown Lawyers of Scotland commenced formidable proceedings to prove that Humphreys was not descended from the Earl of Stirling, and that he had no



pretensions to its name, title, or rights. In the course of this long investigation the same mysterious agency which had whispered his destiny to him, followed him with new proofs when any proof had failed, with a new document when any document was confounded. By post and by miracle the wonderful mis-sives came, to the confusion of the claimant no less than his adversaries, and they surrounded him with a maze of far-reaching data and infinite links of evidence, till his friends saw, what he was blind to see, that either this was the hand of Providence, or of devils,—or *forgery*!

The Crown Lawyers believed the last, and, on the 29th of April thirty years ago, “Alexander Humphreys, or Alexander, pretending to be the ‘Earl of Stirling,’” was arraigned in the prisoner’s dock, before the High Court of Justiciary, to answer for the highest degree of the highest crime, next to murder only.

And here the strange spectacle was presented of a man past the prime of life, with a mountain of evidence ready to fall upon him, befriended, even in the prisoner’s dock, by George Charles D’Aquillas, Deputy Adjutant-General of the forces in Ireland, his former schoolmate.

“Nothing on earth,” said this chivalrous soldier, “would induce me to stand where I do before this court if I did not believe Lord Stirling to be incapable of doing a dishonorable action.”

The latter waived his privileges as a Peer to be tried by a higher court and by a jury of landed men only. There were four Judges on the bench, three lawyers in the defence, and fifteen jurymen in the box—a majority to make a verdict. Members of Sir Robert Peel’s family testified to Humphrey’s high character, and then the seven days’ trial began, to the intense interest and excitement of all Scotland and the aristocratic world of Englishmen.

You have not the space, and the subject is not now entitled, in a chapter of this nature, to the consideration which would permit one to follow out the labyrinths of this evidence, wherein





by experts, French and English, the signatures of priests like Fénelon and Kings like Charles I, the dates of extinct Colonial maps, the leaves of alleged old Bibles, inscriptions on alleged crumbled tombstones, letters half consumed by time, parchments strangely all destroyed by corrosion, save some *excerpt*, bearing solely upon the prisoner's right—all these things you may find related, if you think this article of doubtful credit, in Townsend's Modern State Trials, in the second volume of Samuel Warren's Judicial Miscellanies, and in Archibald Swinton's report of this trial, issued at Edinburgh the year of its occurrence. The Earl of Stirling saw the fabric of his cause wormed through and through by practical publicists and exceptional men of minute scholarship upon dates, doubts, and particles of circumstances, till the whole edifice fell around him; and yet, more wonderful still, while fraud upon fraud and forgery upon forgery lay revealed in the ruin, he himself stood alone and untouched, not a mite of evidence connecting him with any episode of the crime, however slight. The process was like that of picking, tint by tint and inch by inch, some perfect dream from the awakening slumberer, the delusion not all destroyed till the last gossamer veil is withdrawn; and then in terrible shape the Earl of yesterday saw in himself the possible convict of to-morrow.

It was not so with the jury. They constructed the supposition which I have already stated—that the Neapolitan wife of Alexander Humphrey's, in correspondence with Madame Le Normand—the D. D. Home, the Cagliostro, the wizard-demon of that period—had given the latter the family circumstances out of which Le Normand, by means of her large literary acquaintance and her talents, had put together the intricate block-work of this dangerous puzzle.

The jury returned, after five hours' consideration, and unanimously found that two sets of papers were forgeries; that the two other sets of papers were not proven to be forgeries; and that in neither case was the prisoner at the bar proven to have uttered any of them knowing it to be forged.





The prisoner swooned, on hearing the verdict, and was carried out of the court insensible.

This verdict must have settled the fate of Madame Le Normand, if she had anything to do with the fortunes of this case—and the claimant swore to having borrowed four hundred thousand francs of her—for at the time of the trial she was aged seventy.

In 1842, Lord Ashburton came to America to conclude the treaty as to our Canadian boundaries, and then, for the first time, the people of Washington heard of the Earl of Stirling. He had come to say, firmly but courteously, to the American Government that they ought to buy his right in buying his land; for the personal trial he had passed, established nothing against the legal validity of his title. He was still the hereditary Lieutenant of New Brunswick, Canada, and Nova-Scotia, and he demeaned himself as worthy of his rank. If he obtained no money here he obtained respect. His children passed into the civil service of the United States, and are well known as stern and implacable advocates of their cause. Here they have lived; here is still their home, until Britain is kinder; and no British sovereign holds more firmly to his shield with the motto "*Dieu et mon Droit*," than the children of Alexander, sixth Earl of Stirling, working in their government clerkships at two thousand a year.

Seventy years of age is the learned Cushing, the universal attorney for and against the government. His income is not less than forty thousand dollars a year, and his expenses are seventy-five cents a day, his clients paying for his stationery. He receives twenty-five thousand dollars per annum from the Mexican Republic to defend it before the existing Commission, besides copious clerks' hire. There is a well accredited superstition here that he makes his clerks work, and that he sets them the example. Besides this fat thing, which gives him free office-rent, Cushing is literally the *ultima ratio regum* of the Federal Government. Mr. Akerman, coming from the wilds of the Ocmulgee, and knowing nothing of State Depart-



ment cases, flies to Mr. Cushing and retains him in forty or more. Mr. Bristow, the new Solicitor General, sees no other alternative. The Democratic election frauds in New York demand somebody to represent the Administration, and the President of the Baltimore Democratic Convention is the man. Mr. Seward leaned upon the arm of the delightful Caleb, and the latter was vulgarly alleged here to "run" the State Department. He is still the benevolent legal encyclopaedia of this anti-judicial period,—a political time when "the party" proposes to annihilate the Supreme Court because it will not upset the President into the bears' den of Congress,—and there appears to be nobody in the country who is so close to the official elbow. I write all this without mischief. Cushing is the Administration's only trusted legal adviser. Politics has gained so much upon law in the last few years that General Grant has to reach into a past civilization and fetch out John Tyler's Commissioner to China and Franklin Pierce's Attorney-General. Who can explain this necessity, except on the ground that Evarts, Curtis, Trumbull, Hoar, and other large national men, make the administration uneasy by their "muchness" of character and judgment, and that a fine old hack lawyer is preferred, to whom all generations are the same, whose manner never varies, and who universally disbelieves in everybody?

Cushing's character is what might be expected from a man of New England birth and domestic education, who began life by a renunciation of every conventional patriotism, and resolved simply to be very learned. Without any principles except a few business rules: his decalogue ten general antipathies, covering everything human; no ballast but industry, and over all the facile complexion of affability—he has descended to us through seventy active years, and for forty-five of them he has been in incidental public life. He has had for clients nine administrations. His only delight is work. It is his repose, his worship, his substitute for faith. To see him rise at five o'clock, breakfast frugally, and then, with almost sensual avidity, repair to his labor, is to teach us the divine economy of





for a soul with that unwearying scavenger, the fly. It gives almost a human interest to a Yankee clock, and it links Caleb Cushing to his species. His only enjoyment is to go fishing, all alone, about twice a year, and he fishes with the intensity of a full moon, drawing a high tide by his assiduity. At a State dinner he is a delightful guest, full of anecdote, reminiscences and suavity, but few suspect that all this is sheer employment with him. He writes for the great reviews, the *North American*, *Forney's Chronicle*, etc., with abundant learning, but only as an attorney, affirmed or concealed. He went to the Mexican war for employment, but he had no belief in it. Wily, sly, wise, whatever he may be, he has no definite notion of the result which he influences. He is simply an automaton library and gazetteer, worked by perpetual motion in the unknown interest of Caleb Cushing.

As a pleader in court, Cushing is without brilliancy. He will give an owl the blues to listen to him. His three elements of success are learning, the long renown of nearly half a century's prominence, and almost conscienceless tenacity to the cause of his client. He had been eight years in Congress in 1843. He has been a tutor in Cambridge, a Supreme Judge in Massachusetts, and time and again in the State Legislature since 1833. Author, codifier, foreign traveler, Prince in high society, wire-puller in politics, the moderator in that pandemonium after the angel Michael had defeated the slave party, Cushing has descended to us a political atheist, and it is a general remark among the lawyers here that his judgment is not worth an office boy's.

This it is to enter public life without intentions or sympathies, those two grand virtues—the one in man, the other in woman—which make the political son of Hermes.

Solomon tried it longer than Caleb Cushing, and wound up his career with the same words: "Vanity of vanities;" saith the lawyer. There is no reward to mere industry, but industry. A clock exists no more where it ceases to run. Put it in the town steeple or on the family mantel, and to its application is



superadded a sentiment, a duty, a beneficence. But Caleb Cushing runs entirely to himself. He neither tells the time nor knows it. He chews law books for fuel, and runs.

By some one of those unaccountable inundations which drive wharf rats ashore, and make poor houses yawn, Beau Hickman has been alive at Washington for fifty years and may be seen daily in the capitol, fluctuating between Downing's Restaurant and the reception room of the Senate, a consumptive old hummer, with curled moustaches, very fierce, and a ragged old blanket thrown across his shoulders, a cane in his hands, borrowed boots, a spotted brown neck-tie, and a gorgeously-figured vest. His left hand is always twisting his moustache up into additional fierceness, while his right leans heavily upon his cane to save him from the twinges of rheumatism. His face is not without imposing characteristics, and the old vagrant has fought age step by step, clutching on life desperately. His career is a mild exponent of the force of an original predilection for living off men of the world and amongst them. He came to Washington in the hey-day of Southern domination, was a convenient time-server, an amusing bar-room acquaintance, and a man of tailorly appearance, dressed in the height of splendor. For some time he kept his head level; next he descended to being a harmless curiosity whose company paid for his extortion; then he became the *protégé* of gamblers and worse. What terrible struggles with hunger he has had, what secret misgivings of suicide, what human yearnings for death, what aroused instants of sincere and tearful shame, we may never know. A Wandering Jew in the world of politics, a dauntless outcast, too timid for crime, he has illustrated here the extremest miseries of the man who deliberately evades the social contract and trusts to the idle charities of the profligate of his own sex. The brave old vagrant is near the end of his days. The feet of invisible ravens show round his eyes: His stare of precipitate and grateful recognition grows more piteous. What loneliness! What resources! God help us all in our fight for existence.





He waiteth at the Senate door,  
And passing victims grips,  
His waxed moustache he stroketh o'er,  
His seedy beaver tips,  
And he saith: "The good times come no more  
When Beau was full of chips."

He hobbles to the restaurant,  
And spendeth not a groat,  
He wears a President's cast-off boots,  
And a gambler's overcoat;  
And pines for a change in politics,  
By the Democratic vote.

When two or three together be,  
He will unbidden come,  
And strike that goodly company,  
For currency and rum;  
And they pay the impost hastily,  
Lest longer he might bum.

Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing,  
Onward through life he goes;  
Each morning sees him out of food,  
Each evening out of clothes—  
Something encountered, something struck,  
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my deathless Beau  
For the lesson thou hast taught;  
Thus on the fly in politics,  
Our chances must be caught,  
Thus on the anvil of much cheek  
Is fortune beat or bought.

Across a vacant lot from the capitol building, you see a marble yard next to an isolated street corner. Around the corner one door is an alley gate, wide enough for a wagon. A wicket in this gate will admit you into a clean little back yard, closed up by a small, two storied brick carpenter shop. This is the Government Instrument-maker; down stairs are the cabinet-makers, up stairs are the brass workers. It is snug, secluded





and old-fashioned, a place you never suspect, going hastily by—without a signboard, with scarcely a sound to betray itself, a nook where one might wander by some accident and see quaint bits of individual character living there. Here the theodolites, field-glasses, and instruments of engineering upon far plains, mountains, and coasts, are so put together that they fit into boxes small enough to be strapped upon a mule's back. For nearly twenty years these quiet instrument-makers have been working without a rival, just equal to the demands of the Government, building up its necessities. By a link their humdrum lives are bound to the far adventurers, the Indian camping grounds, the railways of the Rocky Mountains, galleries, the canons and sierras of the Pacific Slope. One might dwell in Washington for twenty years and never think to ask whence came the multitude of instruments which are lost, broken or captured upon the wilds of the far West. A little chance suggests the question and reveals the secret together.

Not having been in the habit of holding any interviews, I resolved, one day, to call upon a celebrated corn doctor here; and while pretending to have him rid me of "bunion's" burdens, be really making some inquiries about the footprints of statesmen. This was a highly novel idea, because I have been two years studying heads here, with all the ardor of Gall and Spurzheim, and, as the subject is growing monotonous, I felt that the feet of great men would avail me as an extremity. So I rubbed up my memory with a stiff hair brush, and gave alertness to my faculty of hearing by means of a conch shell which I keep as a gentle stimulant. After listening to this conch some time, speaking with such impressive emptiness, I can hear the footsteps of the flies as they crawl up my sheet of foolscap.

So, with all my antennæ out, I dropped, in an indifferent way, into the sanctum of our greatest corn-surgeon, and asked him to cut four dollars' worth off, but not to hurry about it.

The skillful chiropodist asked me to recline in a luxurious chair, and, while he prepared some occult salve to soften my pilgrim's pack, he gave me a large pile of corns to examine.



He had about one thousand hard corns of all sizes strung upon wire, as a merchant keeps his bills or charges on file. Some were nearly an inch square and looked like a section cut out of a horse's hoof; others were little delicate corns no larger than those raised upon the branching feet of a young robin; others were clear as isinglass, and might have made the previous crystal window in the heel of Achilles; while some were dark and muddy, and the coagulated blood at their centre made them resemble ossified violets or heart's-ease. What a memorandum of mankind and womankind it was! The story of torture for vanity's sake; of high heels consented to in the sacrifice of love; of man's pursuit of wealth, all day upon his feet, and these horny milestones, the silently accumulating measure of his journey; of weary postmen bearing our letters from door to door, while the long, poignant ache rested within the boot unnoticed, like the doleful heartaches in the envelopes which they distributed; of soldiers marching into the jaws of death, but recking less of the enemy's Minie balls than of those missiles which crush the feet at every stride. Here it was, the intensest epitome of woe ever hung up as a business museum.

"What do you keep them for, Doctor?" I asked.

"Curiosity," he said, "and also as an evidence that I have not lived in vain. If the man who gives a cup of cold water to one of these little ones, expects to be remembered in Heaven, what will they say up there when I appear with my linear half-mile of such corns as this?"

He showed right here a corn which looked like three silver half dollars that had been run over by a locomotive:

"Didn't that make him 'ouch'," he said, "and yet that disagreeable and ungrateful fellow had no sooner shed that corn than he turned round, and says: 'If I knew you'd a charged two dollars I'd walked with it half a century first.' That corn ought to have been biled, and he fed on it, as it would hev agreed with the old flint stone."

"So you think there is a religious aspect to your business, Doctor?"





"Yes; I like to think so. So does everybody like to think that he is necessary and comfortable to have round. Yesterday there was a young lady here, whose foot looked like a slim new moon made out of ivory, with a corn peeping out behind it like a star. I cut it off for her, and she said: 'Oh! Doctor, I feel as if I could fly.' And the young man who came with her asked me to give him the corn to put in his watch seal. The young lady says, 'Oh! pshaw, what for, John?' and he replied that he was too jealous to let anybody else keep it. Said I: 'Well, my friend, if you look at it through this magnifying glass you'll find that it isn't a very handsome jewel.' He took it up, and saw what you can see now, if you want to; for he didn't take the corn."

I looked at the little delicate filament through the glass, and it immediately resolved into a whole cow's-hoof, with terraces, spikes, splinters, and at the summit of the gristly pyramid there was a red spot like the crater of a volcano.

"Why," said I, "it is truly piling Pelion on Ossa."

The Doctor now took my foot very much as if he were picking at the flint of an old-fashioned musket, and, having moistened the corn, proceeded with three sorts of knives alternately to quarry off the capstone. Then he cut all my nails with a machine which seemed to be a sort of juvenile guillotine, and having set a plaster upon the spot showed me through the glass a corn like a limekiln.

"Why," said I, "it is as big as Mount Caucasus, and the ache of it was like a vulture's bite. Perhaps Prometheus was only a man with a perpetual corn."

"I don't read mythology no more," he said, "since old Senator McDougall died. After going on a spree he always sobered up, the first thing, by getting his corns cut. He'd come here whether he had any corns or not, for he knew he deserved them; and he would talk Persian, Greek, and Iroquois mythology indifferently. Once poor old Mac told me that he had been on a great spree and fell into an open sewer.

"'Who are you?' said the policeman.



“ ‘Where did you find me?’ said Mac.

“ ‘In a sewer.’

“ ‘Then I must be Seward!’

“ ‘When he told me that anecdote he laughed so that I nearly cut off the whole of his inferior phalanges.’”

“ ‘But you didn’t finish your scriptural account of corns. I don’t remember that the Bible ever mentioned any other sort of sore but a boil, as in the case of Job.’”

“ ‘No! but there are hundreds of inferences which are a great comfort to me; for I’m a Methodist. It’s a comfort to me to believe that John Bunyan conceived the Pilgrim’s footsore progress out of his own name. The whole Bible is full of the anointing of feet; of the bearing up of feet by angels lest they be dashed against stones; and on the human foot the nicest architecture of Providence was expended. The Roman arch was conceived out of the instep. Why, in this here foot of yours, there are twenty-six several bones. Look at my little library, and see how many ingenious and noble men have written upon the foot. Here is Dr. Humphrey on ‘the Human Foot and the Human Hand.’ Here is Craig’s translation of the work by Meyer, of Zurich, called ‘Why the Shoe Pinches.’ Here is Professor Owens’ essay to prove that the human foot is the last and farthest divergence of man’s anatomy from the nearest animals. Here is Meyer’s model for a perfect and scientific shoe. Here is Craig’s pamphlet against high-heels. We have plenty of literature on feet.’”

“ ‘You might add the essays of the Anti-Corn Law League.’ I suggested, “and Ebenezer Elliott. But, Doctor do any of the great politicians come here?”

“ ‘Yes, all of them. There’s a corn I cut off the little toe of Grant after Lee’s surrender. It’s the only wound he ever received in the war; and I’ve been offered twenty-five dollars for it. There’s one of George H. Thomas, a little fellow, and here are the principal sears of Sheridan, McClellan, Lincoln, the whole set. It’s the only collection in the United States.’”

I was now getting down to business, and I put out this question for a flyer:



"Doctor, what sort of a foot has Grant?"

"A solid sort of a edifice," said the Doctor. "He's well sot on his astragali, but horseback has given him a pigeon-toed tendency. When he stands up and ain't thinking, the axes of his feet, if prolonged, pass through each other a rod ahead of him. He's a better officer than ossifier, and his shoemaker has taken a spite against me, so that he don't bear but one crop of corns a year. When old General Halleck was at the head of the army, he walked about so much, devising strategy, that he bore an entire new set every six weeks. He was fruitful as a tomato vine. Some men run as naturally to chalk as a schoolboy to a blackboard. Others are so stingy that a glove never pinches them. But, I hear steps, as of a man limping in the next room, and I presume it is one of the Pennsylvania delegation whose toes the tariff has abraded. Your corn has gone into the American National Pedalion collection, and will be preserved for the benefit of posterity. Good day, sir!"





## CHAPTER IX.

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### SOCIETY AND THE CITY FROM THE MADISONIAN TO THE EMANCI- PATION PERIOD.

The custom of making New Year's calls in Washington is of comparatively recent origin. Mr. Madison, who had witnessed the interesting ceremony in the city of New York, in 1790—then the seat of government—inaugurated the custom at the Executive Mansion, when President, Jan. 1st, 1810. Washington Irving was there in January, 1811, and in a letter to Henry Brevoort, describes Mrs. Madison as “a fine, portly, buxom dame, who has a smile and a pleasant word for everybody. Her sisters, Mrs. Cutts and Mrs. Washington, are like the two merry wives of Windsor; but as to Jemmy Madison, ah! poor Jemmy! he is but a withered little apple-John.” Francis Jeffrey of the Edinburgh Review, who came out in 1812 to marry Miss Wilkes of New York, said—“Mr. Madison looked like a schoolmaster dressed up for a funeral.” When Mr. Madison asked Jeffrey on his presentation—“what is thought of our war in England?”—the latter replied, “it is not thought of at all.”

Mr. Madison was small in stature and dressed in the old style, in small clothes and knee-buckles, with powdered hair—was unostentatious in his manners and mode of life—but very hospitable and liberal in his entertainments; with great powers of conversation, full of anecdotes and not averse to a *double entendre*, though of the utmost purity of life. He was a thorough-bred Virginia gentleman, Jeffrey to the contrary notwithstanding.



In August, 1814, the White House was burned by the British, and Mr. Madison removed to the Octagon, the residence of Colonel



TAYLOE MANSION.

John Tayloe on the corner of New York Avenue and Tenth street—now the Bureau of Hydrography. Here he held his New Year's levee, in 1815, and here he signed the Treaty of Ghent, in the month of February of the same year, in the circular room

over the entrance-hall. In 1816 and 1817, Mr. Madison occupied the house at the north-west corner of Pennsylvania avenue and Nineteenth street, and here received his guests on the first day of those years.

Mr. Monroe's first New Year's reception was held at the White House in 1818. The first term of Mr. Monroe's administration, from 1817 to 1821, has been pronounced by competent authority, the period of the best society in Washington. Gentlemen of high character and high breeding abounded in both Houses of Congress, and many of the foreign ministers were distinguished for talent, learning, and elegant manners. The Baron Hydé de Neuville represented the French aristocracy of the old *régime*, as Mr. Stratford Canning, now Lord Stratford de Redclyffe, did that of Great Britain.

Mr. Monroe was plain and awkward and frequently at a loss for conversation. His manner was kind and unpretending.

Mrs. Monroe, a Kortwright of New York, was handsome and graceful, but so dignified as to be thought haughty. While in the White House Mrs. Monroe was out of health. Her daughter, Mrs. George Hay of Virginia, attended Madame Campan's famous boarding-school in Paris, and was there the intimate





friend of Hortense Beauharnais, the mother of Louis Napoleon. Mrs. Hay was witty and accomplished and a great favorite in society.

In 1822, the Marine Band\* performed at the White House on New Year's day, as the custom has been ever since. In 1824, the doors of the White House were thrown open for the first time on the 1st of January to the public. The *Intelligencer* of the next day congratulates its leaders on the decorous deportment of the people on that occasion.

The winter of 1825 was one of the most brilliant ever known in Washington. It was the period of the exciting election in the House of Representatives, when Mr. Adams, Mr. Clay, and General Jackson were candidates for the Presidency. The Marquis de la Fayette was here as the guest of Congress, and occupied apartments at Brown's Hotel. In the last week of December, 1824, Congress had voted him the munificent sum of \$200,000 for his Revolutionary services. On the 1st of January, the reception at the President's was unusually brilliant—for among the guests were the Marquis de la Fayette and his son, George Washington Lafayette, Harrison Gray Otis of Boston, the northern Chesterfield, Governor Gore of Massachusetts, Stephen Van Rensselaer the Patroon, Rufus King, Mr. Lowell and Mr. Graham of Boston, Mr. Edward Livingston of Louisiana, Mr. Clay, Mr. Webster, Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Everett, Mr. Wilde of Georgia, Mr. Hayne of South Carolina, General Jackson, and many other distinguished persons, with the ladies of their households—all resident in Washington during that memorable winter and forming a galaxy of talent, beauty, and accomplishment which has never been surpassed in any subsequent period of Washington Society.

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\*The Marine Band of Washington has made music at every great entertainment, levee, funeral, or parade held at the Capital since its foundation. It was formerly esteemed the greatest band on the continent, but has of late years grown rusty and inferior. There are fifty pieces in it, and its leader, a Mr. Scala, receives \$75 a month, the men being all enlisted at \$21 a month. They live outside the barracks, marry, draw rations, keep shops, and are chiefly foreigners. This band needs overhauling.



A grand entertainment was given on the evening of the 12th of January, 1825, by Congress to the Marquis de La Fayette at Williamson's, now Willard's, hotel. The management of the affair was entrusted to the Hon. Joel R. Poinsett, M. C. from S. C., Secretary of war in Mr. Van Buren's administration. This duty Mr. Poinsett discharged with admirable taste and to the entire satisfaction of Congress and its guests. The company assembled at six P. M., to the number of two hundred. Mr. Gaillard of S. C., President of the Senate, presided at one table—Mr. Clay of Ky., Speaker of the House, at the other. The President of the U. S., James Monroe, sat on one side of Mr. Gaillard, and La Fayette on the other. The latter was supported by Gen. Samuel Smith of Md., a hero of the Revolution, and in the immediate vicinity with Rufus King, Gen. Jackson, John Quincy Adams, Samuel L. Southard, Mr. Calhoun, Senators Chandler of Me., and D'Wolf of R. I., Gens. Dearborn, Scott, Macomb, Bernard, and Jesup—Commodores Bainbridge, Tingley, Stewart, Morris, and other officers of distinction.

The dinner was prepared by M. Joseph Prospere, a celebrated French cook who came from New York for the purpose, and who charged for his services the modest sum of one hundred dollars. It was the most elegant and elaborate entertainment ever given in Washington—many of the dishes being unique and artistically ornamented in a style never witnessed previously in this country.

In the midst of the dinner, an old soldier of the Revolution, arrived at the hotel from the Shenandoah Valley. He was eighty years of age and had served under La Fayette. Mr. Poinsett being informed of his arrival descended to the reception room and thence escorted him to the dining-hall on the floor above and presented him to the Marquis. "General," said the veteran—"you do not remember me. I took you off the field when wounded in the fight at Brandywine." "Is your name John Near," inquired the Marquis. "It is General," replied the veteran. Whereupon the Marquis embraced him in the French fashion and congratulated him on his healthy condition





and long life. John Near also became the guest of Congress and remained at Williamson's a fortnight, feasting to his heart's content upon the good cheer provided him and retiring to bed every night in a comfortable state of inebriation. When he returned to Virginia, La Fayette presented him the munificent sum of two thousand dollars, with which he bought a farm which is now in the possession of his descendants.

La Fayette at this dinner gave the following toast: "Perpetual union among the States—It has saved us in times of danger, it will save the world." Mr. Clay gave "Gen. Bolivar the Washington of South America and the Republic of Colombia."

The first private house in Washington thrown open for the reception of visitors on New Year's Day was that of the late Mr. Ogle Tayloe on La Fayette Square, in the year 1830. Here the members of the diplomatic corps were accustomed to present themselves, after their official visit to the President, arrayed in their court dresses and accompanied by their Secretaries and *attachés*. Many years elapsed before this custom became general. In 1849 the visitors at the White House proceeded thence to the residence of Mrs. Madison, where they were hospitably entertained. Mrs. Madison was by far the most popular of all the ladies who have presided at the White House. Mr. Ogle Tayloe, in his delightful reminiscences, tells us "She never forgot a face or a name—had been very handsome—was graceful and gracious and was loved alike by rich and poor." Mr. Madison, when a member of Congress, boarded in her father's house in Philadelphia where he fell in love with her, then the widow of Mr. Todd. Mrs. Madison was ruined by her son Payne Todd, who squandered her estate from which she would have realized at least one hundred thousand dollars.

On New Year's Day, 1828, President John Quincy Adams wrote in the album of Mrs. Ogle Tayloe a poem of eleven stanzas, and of great merit. He received on New Year's Day and, like his predecessors Mr. Madison and Mr. Monroe, hospitably entertained his guests. After his retirement from the





Presidency he resided on the corner of Ninth and Sixteenth Streets, where until the close of his life he was accustomed to receive the calls from ladies and gentlemen on the 1st of January. Mr. Adams was stiff and ceremonious in his manners, and though by no means popular, was always an object of respect to the people of Washington. His wife was eminently beloved wherever known.

Forty years ago it was customary among the ladies of Washington to wear for the first time at the New Year's reception at the White House, their new winter bonnets, cloaks, shawls, etc., etc.

General Jackson's receptions, commencing in 1830 and continuing till 1837, were marked by a greater infusion of the *oi polloi* than those of his predecessors. He also provided refreshments, and in 1836, being the recipient of a prodigious cheese from a farmer in Jefferson County, N. Y. ordered it to be cut on New Year's Day and distributed in large slices of a quarter of a pound weight. Many slices of this cheese were trampled under foot on the carpets, and the odor which ascended from it was far from savory.

Mr. Van Buren discontinued the custom of serving refreshments on New Year's Day at the White House, and it has never been revived.

The Winter of 1852, during the administration of Mr. Fillmore, was especially brilliant in Washington. On the 1st of January, the reception at the White House was characterized by the presence of many distinguished persons from every section of the Union. The agitation of the slavery question appeared to have subsided and good-will and fraternity between the North and South were once more the order of the day.

Mr. Fillmore never appeared to better advantage than when receiving his friends. His fine person and graceful manner rendered him conspicuous in this position.

His successor, Gen. Pierce, had also the manners of a gentleman. Mrs. Pierce was saddened by the death of her son, and took little part in the ceremonies of the White House.



Mr. Buchanan's New Year's receptions did not differ from those of his immediate predecessors. Their great charm was the presence of the mistress of his household, Miss Harriet Lane, now Mrs. Johnston of Baltimore, a woman of exquisite loveliness of person and the most charming manners. Who that was ever presented to her can forget the graceful success of her courtesy and her radiant smile of welcome?

During these later years it has gradually become the custom for our private citizens to open their houses on the first day of the year, so that the unusual spectacle to a New Yorker of ladies in the streets on that holiday, is now seldom witnessed. Twenty years ago the streets were filled with carriages on the first of January, bearing ladies in full dress and without bonnets to the President's house and the residences of other members of the Government.

In Mr. Madison's time Washington was a straggling village, without pavements, street lamps, or other signs of civilization. The White House itself was enclosed by a common post and rail fence, while all the other reservations were unenclosed and destitute of trees or any improvement. Even in Mr. Monroe's time carriages were frequently mired on Pennsylvania Avenue in rainy weather. In 1810, the population of Washington was less than that of Georgetown or Alexandria which then each contained eight thousand inhabitants. All those adventurous spirits like Law, Morris, Greenleaf, and others who had made here large investments in real estate, were ruined. Mr. Bush of Philadelphia, writing as late as 1841, said he had long before lost all confidence in Washington property. It was not until the commencement of the Capitol extension in 1851 that the city began to show signs of substantial prosperity and to afford an earnest of its subsequent greatness and strength. In all the past years of its history no improvements equal to those of the year 1872 have been made. At least five hundred elegant houses have been erected by private enterprise—to say nothing of the miles of pavement and drives, constructed by the District Government. A few years more of equal enterprise and





Washington will rank among the most beautiful cities on this continent.

Washington changed character almost entirely after the war. Northern capital moved in and fine architecture prevailed in private buildings. The very form of government was altered, and a Board of Public Works took the paving of streets out of the hands of the local legislature.

The appropriations are now greater than they have ever been in the history of the city,—far greater than when the place was first pitched here. They amount to about \$3,000,000 direct this year, and nearly \$2,000,000 more for public edifices. The Capitol edifice itself gets a snubbing, the architect being a shy man, who had not learned the art of lobbying and could only state the necessity of repairs at least. But the great new renaissance building for the State, War, and Navy Departments has received a lift which will cover it with stone-cutters as soon as Spring opens; a new statue of General Thomas is ordered, to cost \$40,000; and the Farragut statue is taken out of the hands of the artists of the lobby. In two years from this period, there will be six colossal statues in the streets of this city, five of them equestrian, Washington, Jackson, Scott, Grant, Thomas, and Farragut, besides out-of-door statues of Lincoln, Scott, and Washington. The old City Hall has passed wholly into the possession of the United States, and with the proceeds and a diversion of city funds, a new Hotel de Ville will be erected in front of the great new market-house, which has cost \$300,000. Several new street-railways are authorized, and the building-permits applied for or granted show an extraordinary advance in construction, much of which is of a villa character in the suburbs. In May, the whole line of the Baltimore & Potomac Road will be opened, as well as the new Metropolitan Branch of the Baltimore & Ohio. And the Municipal Government has spent \$8,300,000 in about eighteen months, according to its own report, and its opponents say \$11,000,000, assessed upon nearly the full valuation of property.

The enormous aqueduct which runs eighteen miles, through



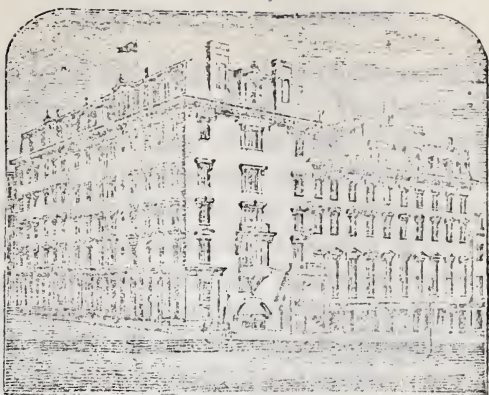
eleven tunnels and over six bridges, is at last completed and connected with the city, at a total cost of about \$6,000,000. Five bridges of the most durable character, probably good for the next quarter of a century, span Rock Creek. One hundred and twenty miles of water-main are now in use in this District, of which twelve miles have been raised or lowered to the new grades; and 530 fire-plugs, 255 public hydrants, and many drinking-fountains carry off the 31,000,000 gallons used every twenty-four hours in this Capital, which is but 20,000,000 less than all Paris gets from its government.

The amount of paving done in the past sixteen months is almost incredible in view of the former slow and conservative progress of the city. Ninety-three miles of brick and concrete sidewalks, and 115 miles of concrete, wood, round-block, graveled, cobblestone, Macadam, or Belgium block street have been laid. Add to this seventy miles of tile-sewer, and eight miles of brick main sewerage through which a buggy can be driven with ease, and the obliteration of the old Tiber Creek and canal by one of the largest sewers in the world, in diameter from 20 to 30 feet, and you will see that old Washington is no more. The landmarks have perished from the eye. And the names of the streets are also to be changed,—those running from north to south to be numbered from First to Sixtieth, instead of First street West, Second street East, etc.; and those running from east to west are to be no longer lettered A, B, C, D, etc., but named, alphabetically, Adams, Benton, Clay, Douglas, etc., on one side, and Anderson, Bainbridge, Chauncey, Decatur, etc., on the other.

The Board of Public Works claims that, between 1802-72, the Federal Government has spent but \$1,321,288 on the streets of the Capital, while the municipality spent upon the same \$13,921,767; adding Georgetown's expenditure, \$2,000,000 more.







EBBITT HOUSE AND NEWSPAPER ROW.

## CHAPTER X.

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### JOURNALISM AT WASHINGTON.

OF which are we representative, who presume to write about these legislators and their legislation? We are representative of an institution coeval with modern forms of government; an institution as human as government, as apt to be wrong as parties; more apt to right up promptly and to see the new dispensation than parties; far less sacred than government itself, and no longer a mystery except to the ignorant—the press! Under various forms we are all striving, in our different ways and according to our several sagacities, or want of sagacity, to determine what the people want. If they want the little and the small, the half-peck measure, the microscope view, the sordid, the pensioned, the deferential, we have cords of it amongst us! If they want the substantial, the results, the ostensible, the official conclusions, the supremely conventional, here it is! I might give you instances of these types, but what is the use? Most of you illustrate for yourselves. If the atmosphere and stimulus of this sort of legislative society are also wanted, the clues, the





missing sequences, the leanings, the entity of separate acts, here a little class works for that also. You have only, in your vast aggregate of the class of readers, to coalesce with the parties which exist, to make your journalism nothing but your prejudice: the daily color of the bile which you raise. A nervous, absorbing, not lucrative profession is ours. Without an intellectual passion in it, it is apt to be degenerating. It has its apprentices and its journeymen, its faithful file and its acquitted rank. It is no nearer perfection now than Congress, the Executive Staff, or the people. But the history of journalism as related to our government is curious and progressive. The democratic passion has broken in upon its former exclusiveness. Instead of being the cats-paw of leaders, it is a daily convenience of the people. Reader and writer are more mutually dependent than formerly, and both regard the politician as a kind of middleman, who subsists by shaving both.

Let us take up the subject of government journalism.

The first paper started under the Federal Government was John Fenno's *Gazette of the United States*, at New York. It was indirectly controlled by the Treasury Department, then the only department with much pap, and was the organ of Hamilton. John Adams was a correspondent for it, under the name of "Davilla." To offset this paper, Madison gave assistance to Freneau in establishing the *National Gazette*, and Jefferson gave Philip Freneau, who was a college graduate, the only disposable office in the State Department, translating clerk.

These papers are collected in the library of Congress, and the following is the head of Fenno's prospectus in his first number:

PLAN  
OF THE  
GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES,  
A NATIONAL PAPER,

To be published at the seat of the Federal Government, and to comprise, as fully as possible, the following objects, viz.:



1. Early and authentic accounts of the proceedings of Congress.
2. Impartial sketches of the debates of Congress.
3. Essays on the great subject of government in general, and the Federal Legislature in particular.
4. A series of paragraphs calculated to catch the "living manners as they rise," &c., &c., &c.

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JOHN FENNO.

April 15, 1789.

Freneau, the Madisonian editor, was the abler of the two, and, from the beginning, the outside aggressive journalism of the country has been more influential and better sustained than the pap-journalism. Freneau finally provoked Hamilton, in the third year of Washington's administration, to reply to him anonymously, saying truly that to be a government clerk and edit a political paper was "indelicate, unfit, and inconsistent with republican purity." Freneau published an affidavit denying that Jefferson ever gave a cent, or wrote a line for his paper. This was the first newspaper war under the republic; Washington interfered in it. Freneau's official salary was \$250 a year; he modelled and took much of his news from the *Leyden* (Holland) *Gazette*. Jefferson is said to have always affected unconcern in newspapers. Hamilton began public life as a newspaper contributor, and he instigated the earliest personal journalism under the government. Jefferson, however, alleged that Freneau had saved the Republic from being monarchized. Freneau's field was soon competed for by Bache, Franklin's grandson, in the *Advertiser*, afterward the *Aurora*, and the Jeffersonian press wrote compactly and in unison over all the country. Then Madison, under the name of "Helvidius," attacked Hamilton, who wrote under the name





of "Pacifcus." Washington wrote that the "publications in Freneau's and Bache's papers were outrages on decency;" nevertheless, Freneau sent him three copies gratis every day.

The administration of Washington closed gloomily, and Dr. Michael Leib, afterward Congressman and Senator, wrote in the *Aurora*, the day the President retired to peace, an article upon the corruptions of the Administration, that a ship contractor cudgelled him for. When Adams came in, almost the whole press was Jeffersonian, and Freneau and Bache had completely exhausted Hamilton with his own favorite weapon, the pen. Hamilton was pursued still further; in 1797, Thomas Callendar, a pamphleteer, whose descendants are said to be still booksellers in Philadelphia, exposed Hamilton's *liaison* with a Mrs. Reynolds, and many indecent letters were published.

The defeated Hamiltonians patronized William Cobbett and his Porcupine's *Gazette*, the *eighth* daily paper published in Philadelphia eighty-three years ago, more than in all the country. Cobbett was then an English Tory, and he did the Federalists more harm than good. He got into collisions with Noah Webster, then a New York editor. In 1797 he was put under bonds for libelling the Spanish Minister. Matthew Carey was also a Jeffersonian editor at that time. Callender was always getting on a drunk, and Cobbett was always getting into court; so John Adams' party resolved upon a sedition law to break up the anti-Federalist press. By opposition the journals thrived and grew steadily bolder.

The *Aurora* accomplished the first newspaper "beat," by printing Talleyrand's despatches against the partiality of the Adams administration before the government got them. This led to a deep jealousy against the newspapers, as dangerous malcontents and usurpers of government authority.

In 1798, the "Party," otherwise the administration, and the press came to a colossal trial of strength. James Lloyd, of Maryland, presented the Sedition Bill, especially aimed at



the *Aurora* newspaper. Hamilton warned the Federalists against it; but it passed. In essentials, it was the French censorship system without warnings. At this time Philadelphia had eight daily papers, New York five, Baltimore two, Boston only semi-weeklies. The *Minerva* in New York, now the *Commercial Advertiser*, was the ablest Federal paper.

The yellow fever, of 1798, slew Bache, the editor of the *Aurora*; but James Duane, born on the shores of Lake Champlain of Irish parents, stepped into the vacant seat. This man had established the first English newspaper in the British East Indies. He married Bache's widow, and rode forth to slay. The yellow fever killed Fenno, also, and his son carried on the concern.

The first victim of the Sedition law was Matthew Lyon, of Pennsylvania, sentenced to four weeks' imprisonment and \$1,000 fine. Lyon was elected to Congress forthwith. The papers now took each other's part, though without organization, and in half a dozen places at once prosecutions began. The Supreme Court was a creature of the Federalists, to silence attacks upon the government. Next, Federal militia officers assaulted Duane. Duane's lawyer, Cooper, was hounded to jail by the implacable Federalists. Chase, the Federal Justice, afterward impeached, then went to Richmond, Virginia, and prosecuted Callender, who was publishing there. Meantime, even Cobbet was driven out of Pennsylvania, and his property sold behind him. He retired to England, and there began the first complete report of the parliamentary debates ever published, while he also conducted a great political journal, no longer reactionary, but radical. Thus, parliamentary reporting over the world may be said to have been born at the American seat of government.

Philadelphia, where these inhospitable things had been wrought upon the press, experienced a successive intellectual decline after the passage of the Sedition law. It has not had one great newspaper since the Capital quitted it. No better did it fare with the party which passed to conclusions the tyrannical





Sedition law. The Federal party departed dishonored. Adams and Hamilton mutually destroyed each other at last, and the spectacle was witnessed of the beaten lights of centralization endeavoring to elect Aaron Burr to the Presidency over Thomas Jefferson. In 1801, the Sedition law expired.

The removal of the public offices to the new city of Washington, was the signal for two new papers, the *National Intelligencer*, Jeffersonian, edited by Samuel Harrison Smith, of Philadelphia, long called by the Federalists, "The National Smoothing-plane," and attacked by Duane's more radical contemporary, as edited by "Silky, Milky Smith." The opposition paper was the Washington *Federalist*, which tumbled to pieces as the gall of its faction wore out.

About the same time the *Evening Post* appeared for Hamilton at New York. Callender, then publishing a paper at Richmond, was refused a Post Office by Jefferson, and he published statements of his patron's negro amours until he fortunately fell into the James River and was drowned. The Clinton Republicans of New York now put James Cheetham, an Englishman, in the *American Citizen* paper, and he began to flay Burr. Burr forthwith established the *Morning Chronicle*. In this latter fight we hear the first of the Dent family, one of whom took an office for his vote against Burr. The end of this triangular contest was the death of Hamilton. He was a gallant, arrogant figure, but he had all the military vices. He planned a government which should appreciate himself, and he threw himself to pieces against the greater politician, Jefferson.

In 1804, Thomas Ritchie established a Jeffersonian journal at Richmond, called the *Enquirer*, the first influential Southern paper, "warm, lucid, gossiping," as Hildreth says of it.

In 1812, the Alexandria (Va.) *Herald* committed the first breach of privilege in publishing a report of a secret session upon a proposed Embargo bill. The editor got off, though he refused to give the name of the leaky member.

In 1812, occurred the Baltimore riots over Alexander Hanson's Baltimore *Federal Republican*, partly stimulated by its





rival, the *Baltimore Whig*. Baltimore was a red-hot war city in Madison's time, and the people were tired of the "old Feds," who were opposed to everything but the English. However, the British got into Washington, and the *Intelligencer* office was torn out by Admiral Cockburn, in person, in 1814.

The *Intelligencer* suffered nothing by this accident. It was forever a decent and cleanly-clad pensioner upon the United States—Jeffersonian till Jackson's time, and then Whig till Lincoln's time, when it became rebel Democratic, and went into the lobby under Johnny Cöyle. It was, in its best days, cold-hearted, didactic, rather a "bore," except to a reverent man, a sort of Sunday-school journal for grown-up sinners. It never fulfilled its business contracts, was always praying for relief or subsidy; was swindled by its business clerks, and it did nothing for independent literature. But it had the longest existence of any merely national journal.

This grave old affectation of a newspaper used to say not one word for perhaps a week after the issuing of a President's message. Then it would appear with a didactic broadside of comment, which would be meat for Whig journals all over the country.

When Jackson's new Democratic party drove the friends of Monroe and Adams to the wall, he resolved upon a new journalist, and a journalistic system as tyrannical and as dynastic as his own nature. He sent down to Kentucky for this individual, and fetched up Frank Blair,—not to be the Freneau of the period, not the witty and fertile aggressor, but the organizer of the newspaper system; and we probably owe to Frank Blair the little that is left of the disposition on the part of party organization to cow editors and read newspapers out of the party. Blair was one of the worst satraps ever engaged in the interest of power against political literature.

During much of Jackson's administration, the quaint, and quaintly named, Duff Green published the *Telegraph* for Calhoun, against old Frank Blair's *Globe* and Gales' *Intelligencer*. On, or about this time, Reuben M. Whitney, who wrote finan-



cial articles for the *Globe*, was threatened with death in committee-room by Baillie Peyton and Henry A. Wise. They put offensive questions to him, and Whitney retorted in kind. These honorable members carried loaded pistols and confessed to their brutality and cowardice at the bar of the House. Investigating committees have little improved in thirty years. Whitney was afterward John Tyler's Register of the Land Office.

The Graves and Cilley duel, in 1838, arose from Cilley's charging correspondent James Watson Webb with receiving a bribe of \$52,000 from the bank of the United States. Graves took Webb's message and Cilley declined to recognize Webb as a gentleman, or "to get into difficulties with public journalists." This duel, in reality, was a blood-thirsty Whig conspiracy, in which Webb and Wise were equally and disgracefully prominent.

Seaton, of the *Intelligencer*, was Harrison's host and Washington city's mayor, when the hard-cider party triumphed.

Henry Clay was a thin-skinned public man. Old Blair punctured his vanity deeply, and Clay revenged himself by taking a printing job from him. "I consider the *Globe* a libel, and Blair a common libeller," said Clay at the same time insulting Senator King, of Alabama. He had to make a public apology to King, who alleged of Blair that "for kindness of heart, humanity, and exemplary deportment, Mr. Blair could proudly compare with the Senator from Kentucky."

Tyler's organ was the *Madisonian*, edited by Thomas Allen and John B. Jones—poor shoats. Jones still lives. He edited a paper at Philadelphia, called the *Monitor*, in 1837, and paid the correspondent *Gath* the first dollars he ever received for writing. This is the best evidence that he was a poor editor. In the *Madisonian* office, John Wentworth and Stephen A. Douglas heard and applauded Tyler's resignation in favor of Polk, both of them here to represent Illinois for the first time.

On the 19th of June, 1844, Morse set up the telegraph between Washington and Baltimore. The *Sun* was probably the first paper in the country to receive dispatches from the Capital.





Polk brought out old Blair, and brought Father Ritchie from Richmond to edit his new paper, the *Union*. The venerable Blair forthwith retired from his long autocracy of luxurious pensioniership; he had been the most dependent independent man who ever reduced public sentiment to a printing job. This old "galvanized corpse," as Clay called him, had largely ruled the party which ruled the United States for three administrations. He used to prepare an article in the *Globe* office and send slips of it to the papers dependent on him for an editorial policy; these papers would alter it and publish it; then old Blair would copy back into his own paper these modified articles, making a whole broad sheet, and call them "Voice of the Democratic press." This tyrannical and gifted old man used to be the political Pope of the party, to read people out of it. Some of his successors try to carry the keys, but there is no party now-a-days strong enough to afford to lose a newspaper. I saw old Blair this day riding into town on horseback, with his wife—a stoutish old dame with bunches of luxuriant white hair. There were some great elements about those Kentucky folks.

It was in February, 1858, that the Honorable William Sawyer, of Wisconsin, took up the New York *Tribune*, and found himself writ down a "critter," who ate sausages behind the Speaker's chair and wiped his hands on his bald head. "Then," said the article, "he picks his teeth with a jack-knife, and goes on the floor to abuse the Whigs as the British party."

The article was signed "Persimmon." William E. Robinson, "Richelieu," correspondent of the same paper, endorsed it. Sawyer rose to a question of privilege, and drew upon himself the everlasting name of "Sausage Sawyer," while "Richelieu," expelled, betook himself to the gallery, and thence worked down to be a member of Congress.

In May, 1848, John Nugent, of the New York *Herald*, got an advance copy of Polk's Mexican treaty, a "confidential document" to the Senate. Nugent refused at the bar of the Senate to tell who gave it to him, and he was put in jail till the end of the session.



Gamaliel Bailey, with the *National Era*, in which he published "Uncle Tom's Cabin," was mobbed by a howling pro-slavery society, very high-toned, in April, 1848. The occasion was some crazy Abolitionists running off seventy-seven negroes in a vessel. Peter Force acted as Mayor, to preserve the peace. James Clephane, clerk in the *Era* office, drove the offending mariners safely out of town by night four years afterward.

In 1850, the *Southern Press* was started in Washington, to drive the Northern papers out of the South. It was a dead failure.

In Fillmore's administration some of the correspondents used to get into the reception room next door to the Cabinet room, and overhear the discussions. Daniel Webster discovered it, and had a door interposed.

In Pierce's time, Forney and the *Union* newspaper began to make a noise. Giddings, of Ohio, wanted the whole set expelled. Frank Pierce was so sensitive about newspaper correspondents, that he had printers set his message in the White House. Giddings used these prophetic words about Forney at that time:

"The editor has read me out of the pale of human society, but the day will come when no individual will have that power or authority."

The civil war enormously increased the influence of the press. Persons who had previously taken one weekly paper, began to take one or more dailies, in order to read the news from the front and to follow the career of their sons and neighbors in the army. About one hundred correspondents were kept in the field, and these had to compete with the narrow military spirit which resented criticism and frequently sought to set the correspondents aside and debar them from information. The correspondents however remained in journalism after the war was over when they again encountered the military men as politicians and Congressmen. The press had now become quite independent of merely partisan patronage and openly entered the lists against the corruptions which had sur-

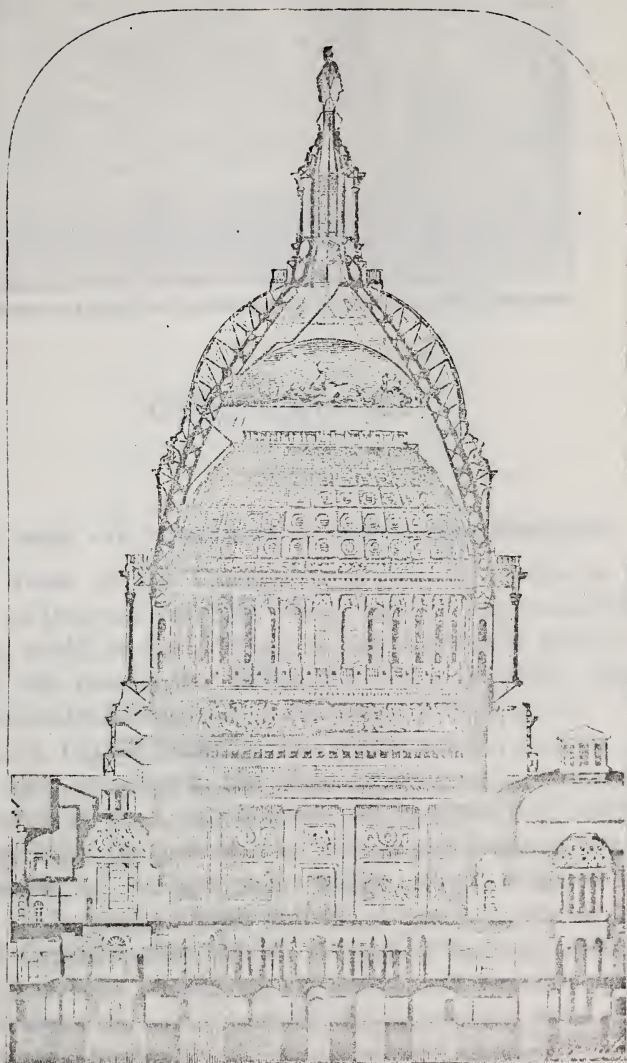




vived the war. The national campaign of 1872 was inaugurated by editors, and a journalist was placed in nomination. Although the combination was beaten, the press kept the sympathy of the country, and none of the journals which had undertaken to chasten public affairs lost in circulation or influence. The charges of loose morals, bribery, and collusion with railroad capitalists, which had been made during the campaign, were clearly proven true by an investigating committee. The chairman of this committee, Judge Poland of Vermont, had a short time previously exonerated a journalist who had made reckless charges on some issue where he was but partly informed. Two newspaper men, who obtained a treaty in some surreptitious way, were indicted at the bar of the Senate but set loose. So formidable had the press become as a purifying instrumentality that one of the Senators, Harlan, joined the profession in order to get square with the correspondents. His efforts in this direction were chiefly notable for their squeamishness and absurdity. The newspapers which won most reputation in the contest with jobbery were the *Springfield Republican*, the *New York Tribune*, the *New York Sun*, the *New York Herald*, the *Cincinnati Commercial*, and the *Chicago Tribune*.

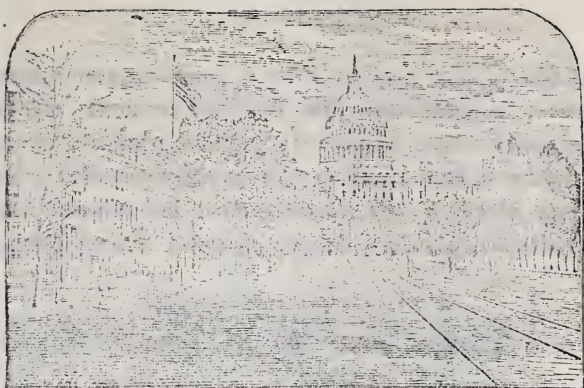






INSIDE SECTION OF THE DOME OF THE CAPITOL,  
WASHINGTON.





THE CAPITOL, AS SEEN FROM PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE.

## CHAPTER XI.

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### THE DOME AND EXTENSIONS OF OUR CAPITOL DESCRIBED.

THE *Dome* of the Capitol, as you know, overhangs the middle of the great building, whose name, in any monarchical country, would be the "Palace of the Legislative Body," as even in this country the White House was originally named the President's Palace, and so described by Washington.

The old Capitol building had three domes upon it; the middle one, standing in the place of the present dome, was constructed of wood, and it stood one hundred and forty-two feet lower than the present. In 1856, it was removed, and the construction of the new dome began, which occupied nine years. It is formed almost entirely of cast iron, resting upon the old Capitol edifice, which, to support so vast additional weight, has been trussed up, buttressed, and strengthened, so that it seems to cower beneath the threatening mass of its superimposed burden.

Let us look at this dome.

Poised over the middle of the long white rectangle of buildings, the great dome rises in two orders: a drum of iron





columns first encircling it, with an open gallery and balustrade at the top; then an order of tall, slim windows; then a great series of brackets, holding the plated and ribbed roof, which ascends, balloon-fashion, to a gallery, within which is a tall lantern, surrounded with columns, like a cupola, and over this a bronze figure of Liberty, capped with eagle feathers, holding



STATUE OF LIBERTY.

in her right hand a sheathed sword, in her left a wreath and shield. She faces east. Her back is to the settled city of the Capital. Excepting this figure, which is of a rich bronze color, and the dark-glazed windows, the whole dome is white as marble. The whole of it, as you see it from the ground, is made of cast-iron; but it harmonizes well in tint with the Capitol building, and is of such symmetrical proportions that it gives you no impression of excessive weight.

It was on the second day of December, 1863, that, at a signal gun from Fort Stanton, across the eastern branch, the head and shoulders of the genius of Liberty began to arise from the ground. As it slowly ascended the exterior of the dome, gun after gun rang out from the successive forts encircling the city; when it reached the summit of the lantern, and joined its heretofore beheaded body, all the artillery of the hills saluted again, and the flags were dipped on every ship



and encampment. Majesty and grace are names for it, and holding at its cloudy height the boldest conception of Liberty, its genius looks calmly into the sunrise, and at night, like a directress of the stars, lives among them, as if in the constellation of her own banner.

Having taken this observation, let us climb to the rotunda. Now look straight up. You are amidst and beneath a vast hollow sphere of iron, weighing 8,009,200 lbs. How much is that? More than four thousand tons; or about the weight of seventy thousand full-grown people; or about equal to a thousand laden coal cars, which, holding four tons apiece, would reach two miles and a-half. Directly over your head is a figure in bronze, weighing 14,985 lbs. If it should fall plumb down, it would mash you as if thirty-seven hogs, weighing four hundred pounds a piece, were dropped on your head from a height of two hundred and eighty-eight feet. This bronze figure is sixteen feet and a-half high, and with its pedestal nineteen feet and a-half. Right over your head, suspended like a canopy, is a sheet of metal and plaster covered with allegorical paintings. This hangs between you and the bronze statue of Liberty, and is a hundred and eighty feet distant. There are, therefore, one hundred and eight feet of the full height of the dome which you cannot see at all within, and in like manner the diameter of the rotunda in which you stand is ninety-seven feet, or eleven feet less than the exterior diameter of the great dome, far above, and thirty-eight feet less than the extreme exterior diameter at the base. The old rotunda erected here by Bulfinch was ninety-six feet high.

This dome differs interiorly at present from most others by being a mere cylinder, closed with a dome, whereas, nearly all famous domes besides are raised upon churches, which are cross-shaped, and project a dome from the abutments of the hollow cross. In these abutments, high up, statues are commonly set, as in St. Peter's, where the four angels are placed there. No merely civil edifice in the world can boast a dome at all approaching these proportions.





The pressure of the iron dome upon its piers and pillars is 13,477 pounds to the square foot. St. Peter's presses nearly 20,000 pounds more to the square foot, and St. Genevieve, at Paris, 46,000 pounds more. It would require to crush the supports of our dome a pressure of 755,280 pounds to the square foot.

The first part of the rotunda, next to the floor, is a series of panels, divided from each other by Grecian pilasters, or *axtæ*, which support the first entablature, a bold one, with wreaths of olive interwoven in it.

The decorations of the dome consist of four great *basso-relievos*, over the four exit doors from it, and of eight oil paintings, each containing from twenty to a hundred figures, life-size. These paintings are set in great panels in the wall, under the lower entablature. Four of them are by Colonel Trumbull, Aid-de-Camp to Washington, the "Porte Crayon" of the Revolution, and these are altogether the best historical paintings which the country has yet produced. The other four paintings, with forty years advantage over those of Trumbull, are deteriorations. Three of them represent, respectively, the marriage of Pocahontas, the landing of Columbus, and the discovery of the Mississippi. They are poorer than the average of paintings in the gallery of Versailles, and scarcely rise above the art of house and sign painting. The other picture, Prayer on the Mayflower, has good faces in it, and dignity of expression, but it is dull of color, and without any breadth of light. Trumbull's pictures are conscientious portraits, the work of thirty years' study; they are without any genius, and timid in grouping; but accurate, appropriate, and invaluable. Congress gave him an order for the whole four at once, and wisely. The others ought to be taken down when we can get anything better, and sent into some of the committee rooms.

The *basso-relievos* in the panels, above the paintings, are works of two Italians, pupils of Canova, named Causici and Capellano, who, like a great many other itinerant Italians, have done work about the Capitol. One or two of them, disgusted





with the American taste in art, or stricken with the national benzine, jumped into the Potomac, and made their lives more romantic than their works. These base reliefs are only of three or four figures each, and are copied from curious old engravings, cotemporary with the events; they are not beautiful, but odd, and make variety amidst our perennial and distressing newness. Between these large reliefs are carved heads of Columbus, Raleigh, La Salle, and Cabot.

These pictures, true and disgraceful both to the national taste, answer in general the purpose of pleasing people. Learned rustics may be seen laboriously criticising them to their sweet-hearts. The privilege is also accorded to artists and others of exhibiting their models and amateur sketches in the rotunda, whereby all sorts of strange prodigies appear, flattering, at least, to our democratic charity, but very amusing to foreigners.

Above this series of *relievos* and paintings, there is a broad frieze, intended to be painted in imitation of *basso-relievo*. Above this frieze there is another entablature; these are broken up by tall windows on the outer circumference of the walls of the dome, and at places between the domes can be seen glimpses of galleries and stairways ascending between the inner and outer walls. At last, the interior concave walls of the dome proper made to represent panels of oak foliage, rise in diminishing circles to the amphitheatre in the eye of the dome, which is sixty feet in diameter, and surrounded with a gallery all of iron. Down through the eye of the dome looks the great fresco painting of Brumidi, and you can see people the size of toys walking directly under this fresco, looking now up, now down.

It will cost to finish and paint this dome as it should be done, not less than \$250,000. For the painting in the frieze, \$20,000 will be required; to reform the architecture of the dome by reducing the number of the entablatures will cost, probably, \$100,000. To paint the iron panels in imitation of oak, as they are cast, will cost \$30,000 to \$50,000. It was the intention to have buried Washington under the floor of the rotunda; this failing, to bury Lincoln there, and to open a

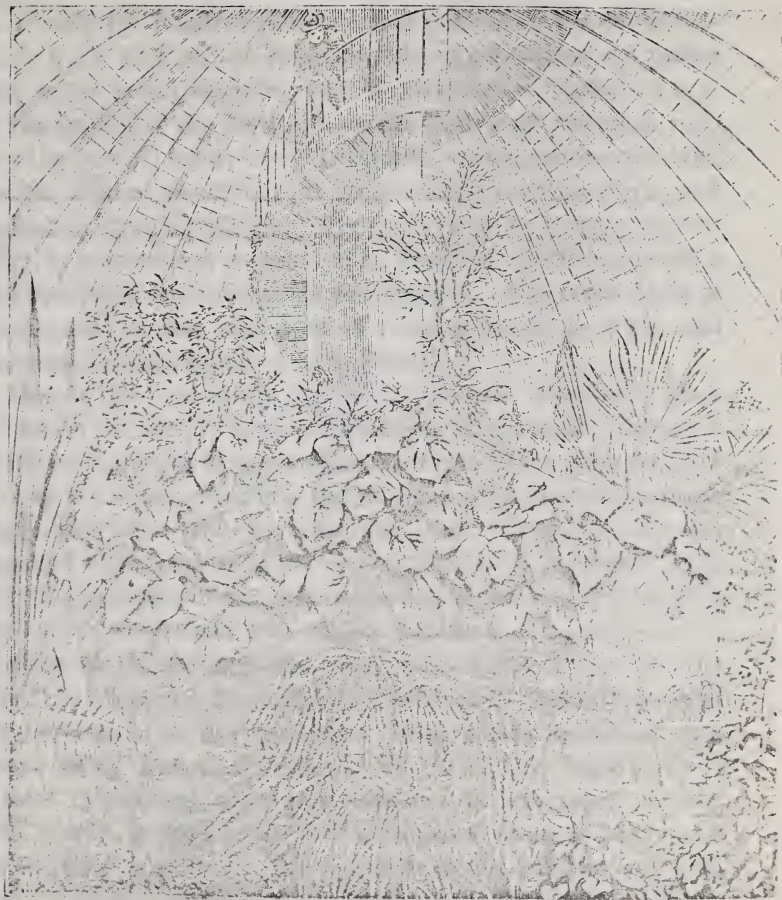


large galleried place in the floor, through which the visitor could look at the sarcophagus, as is the case with the tomb of Napoleon, under the dome of the *Hôtel des Invalides*, in Paris. In either case, the families of the dead objected, and with good taste; for a rotunda, used for profane and noisy flirting, hobnobbing, lobbying, and loitering, is no place for a hallowed sepulture. Here the statue of Washington, by Greenough, stood, till removed by barbarous enactment, in all its Roman nakedness, into the adjacent park. Something of the worthiest and most colossal is requisite here—a statue of Public Opinion, say, or an allegory of Destiny, or an effigy of Democracy. So, around the sides of the dome, there are spaces for statues and busts, which ought some day to be filled.

Situated midway between the two houses of Congress, at the middle of the Capitol, and across all the avenues of communication, the rotunda under the dome obtains, as it always will obtain, an important and picturesque place in the history of legislation. There are iron settees around it, where wait for appointments of various sorts, people of all qualities and pursuits, some to waylay, some to rest, some to see the infinite variety of race or station, or behavior of passing people. Bright paintings encircle it, for height and admissible enterprise are suggested there; something curiously instructive, some problem to the thought, is everywhere. Danger and power, suppositious accident and vivid carnival, fill up the hours. It is one of the most curious studies in the world, and destined to be the scene of vital conferences, wild collisions, perhaps of solemn ceremonies, sometimes of happiness, sometimes of anarchy, sit here, under this high concave; and, while the feet of the perpetual passengers fill the void with echoes, you may interpret them to the coming of the mob, when legislation is too slow for brutal party rage, or some unflinching Senator may hear from hence the howling of Public Opinion. Here may some brave act the best assassination; here may be promised the price of eminent treason. Here may some conquering army, mastering the Capitol once more, unfurl their foreign standards, and with







THE DOME AND SPIRAL STAIR CASE IN CONSERVATORY,  
AT WASHINGTON.



their enthusiasm or orchestras celebrate the fall of the Republic. So long as the people reign, the Capitol of the United States will not be distributed between the wings, but concentrated under the dome. The rotunda is western human nature's amphitheatre. Here will stroll the chaotic dictator of Democracy, with its hundred hands on the wires of the continent. Many a fair face will do temptation upon patriotism and public duty in the broad sounding area of assignation, typical as it is of the arcana of the earth, where the individual voice but rolls into the general echo; the general echo is sometimes articulate, but the highest shout that all can raise stays a little while, and expires in stronger silence. The dome, with its hungry, hollow belly, is government as you find it, familiar with its gluttonies and processes, its dyspepsias and cramps. The outer dome is government as the vast mass of citizens behold it—white and monumental, and crowned with Liberty.

How is this vast height lighted, is the next question. Here we are in the battery room, which adjoins the dome. The smell of the acids, ranged in quadruple circles around the place, in glass jars as big as horse-buckets, has no other effect upon the battery-tender, he says, than to make him fat. There are here one hundred and eighty cells set up and filled with sulphuric acid, after the principle of Smee, constituting altogether the strongest battery in the world, and which furnishes the power to Mr. Gardiner's electro-magnetic apparatus, which lights the lantern, the dome and the rotunda, touching up thirteen hundred gas-burners in a few moments. The whole machinery cost about thirty thousand dollars. Of itself, this beautiful and almost miraculous apparatus deserves a newspaper article. The power is fifty tons, as if a thunder cloud as heavy as a laden canal boat were concentrated on the point of a needle, and "fetched" you a dash in the eye. To light up the Capitol by this machinery, there is an electro-magnetic engine, with connecting wires to all the burners in the building, and to each wire a metallic pointer; the gas is turned on by cranks, answering each to a portion of the Capitol; then the magnetic bolt is





darted up the proper wire ; in thirty seconds the darkness is ablaze. This apparatus occupies one of the old wing domes of wood, the dome being the battery room, the engine standing next door. Thus the old building sends light up to the new one ; the little dome holds fire for the great dome. You should see them turn the great dome from perfect night to perfect day. Stand under it ! A little moon dazes the far up slits of windows ; the concave eye is absolute night ; all the sculptures are lost upon the wall ; color and action are gone out of the historic canvases ; the stone floor of the rotunda might be some great cathedral's, for you can only feel the gliding objects going by, and hear the dull, commingling echoes of feet and whispers.

At a wink the great hollow sphere is aflame. You can see the spark-spirit run on tip-toe around the high entablature, planting its fire-fly foot on every spear of bronze ; a blaze springs up on each ; chasing each other hither and thither, the winged torch-bearing fairies on the several levels race down the aisles to the remote niches, to lateral halls, to stairways all variegated with polished marbles, over illuminated sky-lights armorially painted. Your thought does not leap so instantly ; and people far off in the city see the lantern at the feet of the statue of Liberty, arise in the sky as if a star had lighted it. Since the first commandment of God to the earth, light has had no such messenger. It is nearest to will—it vindicates Moses.

No great building in the world is so lighted, except the Academy of Music, and some theatres in New York. But thirty thousand dollars is dear even for a miracle. Matches are high.

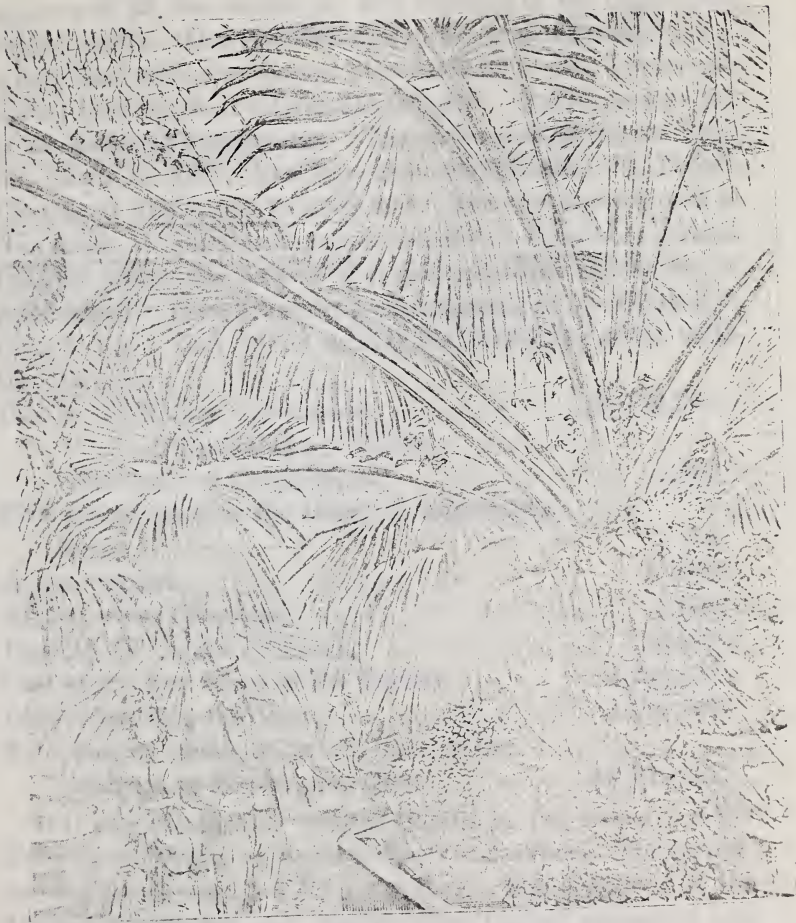
Standing here, at so lofty an altitude, one is apt to suppose that he has reached the king of human peaks. Not so. St. Peter's at Rome, is 432 feet high to the lantern, or 144 feet higher than the tip of this airy Liberty. St. Paul's in London, is seventy-two feet higher than this.

And the great Capitol itself, down upon which we are looking, covering 652 square feet, more than three and a half acres, is one-eighth smaller than St. Peter's Church, and only one-fifth larger than St. Paul's.





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VIEW IN THE CONSERVATORY AT WASHINGTON.  
FAN PALMS, ETC.



Yet it is high enough for timid people. The highest part of the Capitol building is nearly two hundred feet below us.

How much money is there in all this Capitol? What did it cost? Upon the aggregate head, I doubt if the congregated consciences of all the architects and builders of the Capitol can reply, exactly. One gentleman, who has been figuring up at it a long time, estimates the cost at \$39,000,000. The lowest estimate I have heard at all was \$15,000,000. But let us see what is the architect's statement. The entire cost of the old Capitol, down to 1827, was less than \$1,800,000. St. Peter's Church, at Rome, cost \$49,000,000. The new Court House in New York, is said to have cost \$3,000,000. People have talked foolishly about the cost of the public edifices at the seat of government. Here are some precise figures, as Mr. Clark gave them to me. They do not include the furnishing of the buildings, however:

Cost of the library apartments,	- - -	\$ 780,500.
“ “ “ Oil painting by Walker:		
“ Storming of Chapultepec,”	- - -	6,000
Five water closets in the House of Representatives,	- - - - -	2,178
Annual repairs,	- - - - -	15,000
Annual repairs for dome,	- - - - -	5,000
Heating old Capitol (centre),	- - - - -	15,000
Cost of the new wings of the Capitol,	- - - - -	6,433,621
Cost of building the dome,	- - - - -	1,125,000
Total cost of construction of all the public buildings in Washington City,	- - - - -	27,715,522

It is very pleasant to visit the Capitol in the recess. After Congress adjourns, we begin to know each other. The carpenter and the barber go fishing together. The architect of the Capitol inquires for your family. The Capitol policemen and the officers of the barracks near by stop at your door-step to chat with your baby. It is like living in some college town during the vacation, and very cool, amiable, and agreeable is Capitol Hill in Summer.





At Whitney's I saw, a few days ago, a white bearded old gentleman, of a Northern and business habit and address. He had a brown complexion, a square-ended nose, beveled at the tip, and a hearty down-cast manner.

"Don't you know Mr. Fowler, Gath?" said a gentleman near by. "This is Mr. Charles Fowler, who built the dome of the Capitol."

Mr. Fowler was born in Hartford, Connecticut. He is, or was, a member of the former firm of iron founders, Fowler & Beeby, at Read and Centre streets, New York. He was the lowest bidder to cast the patterns for the dome, and that noble piece of iron work, solitary in the world, was set up by him. Perhaps you can best get the spirit of what he had to say in the categorial form in which he gave it.

"What was your contract, Mr. Fowler, when you first undertook to build the dome?"

"Seven cents a pound for all the iron used. The architect, Thomas N. Walter, made the designs, piece by piece. They ran, for example, an inch to eight feet. I was to put up the dome, furnishing all the scaffolds, workmen, and so forth, for seven cents a pound."

"Did they keep their bargain?"

"No. General Franklin was superintending engineer when I first arrived here. He made the contract for the War Department. After I had run the dome up to the top of the first order, or the drum, as you see it there, General Meigs was put in Franklin's place. He cut my contract down, arbitrarily, to six cents a pound. I consulted my lawyers, and they said:

'This cutting down of your contract is a piece of force, having no authority in law. But if you don't submit to it, you will be kept out of your money at ruinous expense. So accept it and come back upon the justice of the government at another time.'

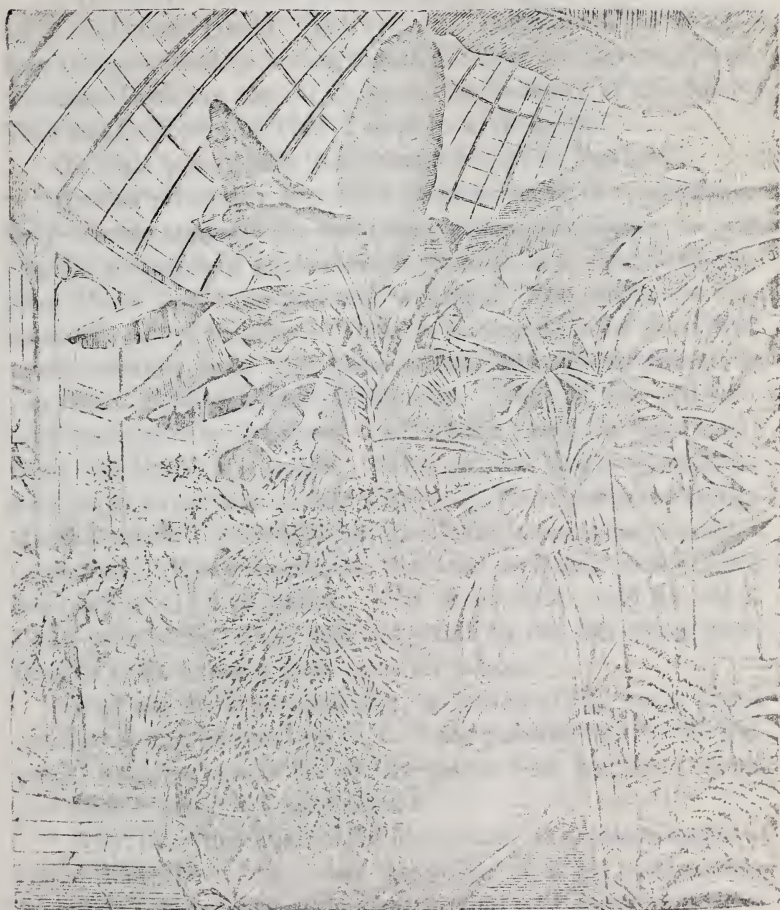
"Therefore I took the six cents, and the work was stopped.

"The yard of the Capitol was littered with iron, Senator Foot and others began to ask:

'Why is the work on the dome suspended?'



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"They demanded a recontinuance of the work, and had an order made out transferring the work upon the Capitol extension from the War to the Interior Department. This was done to lift out of Cameron's hands the matter of the dome.

"I went to the Secretary of the Interior and demanded my additional cent a pound. It was paid. I demanded also the fifteen thousand dollars which, under the first arrangement, was withheld from my control to insure the finishing of the dome. This was paid over. Then I went to work again."

"On what principle is that dome set up, Mr. Fowler?"

"On this principle: there is a skeleton series of ribs within: they extrude supports for the outer dome: the figure on the top, the government guaranteed to furnish, as it afterwards did, from Clark Mill's designs and castings. The scales on the dome are bolted together. There is no structure in the world more enduring than that dome. You may call it eternal, if you like. It weighs over 5,000 tons. That is, you tell me, only one-ninth the weight of the Victoria tower, on the Parliament buildings, in London. Why, sir, the Rocky Mountains will budge as quickly as that structure. There are some things about it which I don't like, but the Government Superintendent is absolute. For example, the first coat of paint should have been different. I protested. 'Put it on white,' said the chief. Consequently the dome eats up paint by the ton every year, because there is not a good color for a base."

"Does not the dome leak, sir, by reason of the metal plates expanding and contracting? Is it not possible that by the perpetual working to and fro of the plates, rust, fractured rivets and final collapse will take place?"

"Why, the whole dome is of one metal: it expands and contracts like the folding and unfolding of a lily, all moving together. An atmospheric change that will move one piece moves all—scale and bolt. Rust will happen, but to avoid this the building must be kept water-tight and well painted. It is not by mechanical changes that public works are affected, but by sudden and unnecessary political changes. For example: I got





a judgment against the Government in the Court of Claims last week for twenty-six thousand dollars. They made a contract with me to put up the wings of the Library, as I had already finished and delivered the main part of it. The Secretary of the Interior was suddenly changed, and he abolished my contract whimsically. Therefore, I bring suit, and his little whim costs the people twenty-six thousand dollars, besides putting me out of pocket even at that. See, also, the effect of a change of superintendents, which I have already referred to. I have a claim of sixty-odd thousand dollars for the increased cost and delay incurred by me through the substitution of Meigs for Franklin. Had they let me go on by the terms of my contract, I should have had the work done by 1861. They stopped me arbitrarily; the war came on; iron went up some hundred per cent; the river was lined with rebel batteries; freights went up 400 per cent; the price of labor went up almost as badly. A new man's whim will cost sixty thousand dollars, perhaps, to the people; if not, it will come out of my pocket.

"I tell you, sir," said the dome-builder, encouraged in his theme, "whim, freak, change, are responsible for a good deal of folly and more extravagance here.

"Let me show you how they got a dome in the first place; for that is an example: .

"Mr. Walter, the architect, prepared the plans for a complete extension of the Capitol—new wings, new dome, and a new marble front for the middle or freestone building, which was the old Capitol; and, as he knew very well that Congress would never vote this money in the most economical way,—that is, in bulk, or by fixed yearly parcels—he first submitted the wings.

"Next, as Congress was about adjourning at the end of a session, and they were all very merry at night—ladies on the floor, everything lively, the dome, splendidly painted, was presented in a picture and adopted at once."



## CHAPTER XII.

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### SOME OF THE ORGANIC EVILS IN OUR CONGRESSIONAL SYSTEM.

THE present chapter will deal in a discursive way with some of the evils in general legislation.

With every Congressman comes a little knot of retainers, often to his own disgust; for he has used them and finished, and now they are quick that he shall fulfil his promises. Promises are ruin-seeds. Nine-tenths of the crime of the state is tied to rash and often needless promises. "Mr. Godtalk," says Stirrup the saddler, "I admire your course, sir, and want to see you re-elected."

"Stirrup," says Godtalk, "why don't you get the post-office? It will be a nice little addition to your income, take no time from your trade, and be an honor amongst your neighbors."

"Mr. Godtalk, I never aspired to office, sir."

"Tut! tut! Stirrup; it's easy as asking. If I'm elected I'll work for you!"

Behold! the first uneasy and interested seed is planted in the good citizen. He becomes henceforward a corrupted man, the "bore" of his Representative, another hanger-on around the Capitol. This loose and almost always needless tendering of promises is the mistake of the politician, and the corruption of the constituent alike. Every promise, loosely made and broken to the hope, returns to plague giver and receiver. We have been promising the darkeys in the South—some of us—a





mule and a forty-acre farm. Let us look out that the mule doesn't kick us dead, and the forty-acre farm be our political cemetery. Promise nothing out of the contract of principles. Come to Washington with free hands, and the highway to honor, if it has enemies before, will have no assassins behind! No sooner had the members of Congress begun to arrive, than the poor promise-bearers followed after. They looked mean, as does every man with an immortal soul, who waits for a favor that he does not deserve. The saddler's fingers were nervous. The citizen's direct look of searchingness, and yet confidence, had a sycophantish, sidewise smile in the bottom of it. The man was clinging by his eyelids to a politician's word of honor, and God help the hold on that support! The constituent had already begun to feel revengeful, for his suspicious fears, born of his conscious meanness, had begun to reproach his Representative. Both were disgusted. The politician had dishonored the saddler's hearth with a foolish promise, and made a family malcontent, and traitors to obedient, cheerful citizenship.

There is no time when one sees these personal errors so vividly in their effect upon the State, as at the opening of Congress. The power of the State, as an attraction and an evil, when it enters into competition with the private patrons of the people, is at this time very manifest. You live, perhaps, down in Egypt, or on the Illinois Central Road, and get the paper afar off, and in your heart you honor the State. The news, as it comes from Washington, is vague and great to you. The names of senators are resonant names, which you hold in excellent respect. The Government is the mighty protector of you and yours, a sworded benefactor, a most impartial father, and yet almost your son.

When this Government, by one of its officers—legislator or what not—comes down from its misty remoteness of sun and thunder cloud, like Jupiter to Danae, and singles one of you out for its caresses, the pure worship you have paid it turns to personal lust and jealousy. Therefore, the fewer possessions



that the Government holds, the better for it and you. With its clear, attenuated brow and naked buckler, it is our common champion; but with armsfull of public lands, bon-bons of railway subsidies, Christmas gifts of Indian contracts and sinecures, and the whim and capacity to make invidious favoritisms, Government entering the market place is the wickedest debaucher of the people.

A man came to me recently. "You know a good many people in Congress," he said; "I've got a little business I want to see you about after awhile. I'm here in behalf of the Snuffbox tribe of Indians!"

"What do the Snuffboxes want?"

"Oh! they're despret anxious to get that treaty o' theirs fixed; want to sell their land, you know, being hard-up and desirous of agoing South. It's all just and fair as the Golding Rule. This yer Osage expozay spiled the treaty of the Snuffboxes. But, as I said before, ourn is clar and just as the Golding Rule."

Not being a street preacher, I replied only in generalities to this gentleman; but in this correspondence may make it plain to you that by the very situation of the Government we have been unjust to the Snuffbox Indians and this corrupt lobbyist together. This was evidently an intention to cozen the Snuffboxes out of three or four millions of rich acres; but why was this man, apparently a good citizen (he had been a soldier) in the job?

Because Government was in the market as patron and employer. The citizen found a short cut to wealth by making a treaty, and quitted his honest livelihood to come to Washington and make marketable the plausibilities of Congressmen. Here he saw a way to spend a year of dishonorable feeling, "smelling," and huckstering for the sake of a lifetime of wealth. We must make an honest man of him by putting Governments out of the market, abolishing the Indian title in lands, and setting the entire government real estate on an equal footing, so that you, John Smith, Tom Walker, and the





devil may be made equal as purchasers, so far as nature finds you.

The mere value of a residence here is esteemed as so much money-right, because you may board with a Senator, lend a horse to a Sergeant-at-Arms, or know a doorkeeper well, and this involves the possible right to demand a favor of the Federal State.

"Do you want five thousand dollars down in a check?" said a man to another once in my hearing. "Here it is. I want somebody in the Senate to propose to take up the bill making seven Judge Advocates. I don't want you to see it pass, because there are seven of us who have fixed all that. It's bound to pass! We only want some one Senator to lift it up. Whom do you know?"

This was in the last hours of the session. Suppose you lived here, and had entertained Senator Enoch, of Hindoocush, with a soft crab lunch; what more easy than to slip up to the doorkeeper, say, "Take this card to Enoch," see Enoch come benevolent through the door, say "Senator, my nephew depends on this bill being raised; vote as you please, only move to lift it; did you enjoy those crabs?" And, presto, there is \$5,000 down merely for knowing one man.

So large is the power of the Federal Congress becoming, that to be a doorkeeper, messenger, even a page, is to possess a chance to obtain offices, privileges, and appropriations. I used to see a dull-eyed man in one of the galleries—a doorkeeper. One day there was a huge overthrow of officials, and into a post of great trust this doorkeeper walked. From being a servant, he became an officer of Congress, and in his present place knows matters so valuable, that the regular Secretary of the Senate cannot know them. The choice may have been a superb one, but I instance it only to show the advantage of having the right of acquaintanceship with Congress. Clerkships in the House and Senate, are worth fortunes to some people. Here in the Clerkship of Claims, Mr. Corbin grew wealthy, and yet he never had a vote; but the knowledge of





what was going on, and the right to salute honorable members familiarly, and to say a good familiar word for some one's claim—this was his royal road.

Few persons are aware how Congress conducts business, and one might go to the chambers and read the *Globe* every day for two years, without growing a great deal wiser. Yet it is by the defects of the organization of Congress that thievery thrives—defects inseparable from all human contrivances.

The commercial republic whose soul and courage be not in sentiment, but in necessity, is open to this criticism, that, while it has money to spend to keep the empire together, it does not like to risk its blood for the same purpose.

A Mr. Shannon, of California, who was a member of Congress during the war, said to me the other day :

“ This Congress, and every other that I have seen, is cursed by demagogues. I can understand a scoundrel, and meet him ; but a demagogue is an insidious being, who works with treachery upon the instability of periods and localities, and defeats good legislation, by making somewhere a prejudice. During the war, when we had been defeated on the Rappahannock, and everything was going to pieces, Congress sat here in session, debating how to make a new army. It was proposed, in this emergency, to have a conscription, and make every man, if necessary, come out to defend his country ; but when this bill passed, what did that demagoguing Congress do, though it sat within a day's march of the enemy ? Why, they set about passing a commutation bill, which was, in fact, nothing but a bill to raise revenue. The United States had a right to every man in it to go to the front if he was needed and take his chances, but that miserable set of demagogues sat there wrangling as to whether the draft policy could not be evaded by the payment of some money.”

In this you can see how the commercial republic prefers to sacrifice but one thing, and that is cash. In peace it will buy justice, and in war it prefers to buy the nation back, rather than to fight for it. Here is one of the greatest evils at the Capital,



not that corrupt legislators hot from the stews of caucus, will take money for their vote, but that commercial men of high character, will pay the money in order to save time. When a set of interests in New York want a bill essential to their solvency,—a bill perfectly proper in itself to pass Congress, they employ a lawyer and send him on here, with authority to draw money if it be needful; and he generally gets but one instruction, and that is to carry the bill, and, “if these fellows begin to tinker about it, just pay them.” It is the country people of the United States who are still its mainstay—the large class who have not been debauched by great profits, and whose devotion to the State is as strong as the family tie itself. If we can stop demagoguing among the poor people, and corruption amongst the enterprising, we shall have solved the main problem; and our reserve forces, which are rapidly gaining strength,—such as intelligence amongst the masses, the dissipation of old illusions—such as the assumption that the plundering of the many is business—and the drafting of good men into politics by a sort of social enforcement—these are our reliances to save the State.

Here, before me, as I write, is the Captain’s chart, the manual for the Speaker of the House of Representatives. It consists of 500 odd pages, and superbly bound, and is a piece of government work, pronounced by Colfax to be the best parliamentary manual in the English language.

The contents of this book are: 1. The Constitution, and amendments, of the United States—so well indexed that the Speaker can catch any phrase of it in a couple of winks. 2. Thomas Jefferson’s manual of parliamentary practice, which, by law of 1837, governs “in all applicable cases.” 3. The standing rules and orders of business in the House of Representatives, 161 in number. 4. Joint rules and orders of the house, 22 in number. 5. Standing rules in the Senate, 53 in number. 6. The whole of the foregoing digested or made compendious and perspicuous by John M. Barclay, Journal Clerk of the House of Representatives. The digest alone,





making 212 large pages. Herein you have the traditional and self-imposed laws of the National Legislature in the popular branch, and he who shall study this book well, can be advised of the most economical, expeditious, and impartial way of carrying on the federal legislation of the Republic. A very few members, however, have studied the manual: some have never looked into; and a large proportion of those who know it best, have mastered it for the purpose of taking advantage of it.

Young men and boys have a good deal to do with legislation.

Willie Todd, Speaker Colfax's messenger. Of him I took occasion to inquire into the person and history of Thaddy Morris, who had been page to Speaker Pennington in 1859, and virtual Speaker of the House of Representatives. Mr. Pennington was a delightful old gentleman, ignorant of parliamentary practice, and he was elected by a compromise between the adherents of Sherman and Marshall, of Kentucky. Placed in his embarrassing chair, he found the great dog-pit of the House barking, like Cerberus, under him, and he took every ruling, point, and suggestion from Thaddeus, most gratefully.

Once, it is related, when young Morris had prepared everything snugly for Pennington, outlined the order of business, prompted him completely, and left the course "straight as the crow flies," so that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not go astray, he said to the Speaker: "Now, go on."

"Now, go on!" cried Pennington, promptly, to the House; at which there was huge laughter.

It was an inspiring thing to see that delicate boy, secreted in the pinnacle of the nation, like Paul Revere's friend in the old South Church spire, supplying knowledge to the gray-beard who had the honor without the skill of governing. There is many a boy, unseen, at the elbows of statesmen—little fellows of downy chins—whose heads are as long as a sum at compound interest.

This is the Senate-house, a room all gold and buff, a belt of buff gallery running round it; through the gold of the roof twenty-one great enameled windows giving light. The floor hereof is a soft red English carpet; deep golden cornices sur-



round the hall; a blue-faced clock without a sound goes on with time remorselessly. So blackly the people fill all these galleries that it is but here and there a sunbeam falls upon a face, making it warm yellow; the far-ceiling corners of this hall are full of darkness; dark also are the deep-gilt ornamentations in the edge of the ceiling; upon the floor, however, where the chief actors stand, it is clear as open day.

The scenes witnessed in the night sessions are a good deal like the physical manifestations to which you are used in old cross-road churches at what is called "revival time." People speaking against time to exhausted auditors, each auditor, however, getting up steam for his particular turn at exhortation or prayer. The Speaker, whose attention and nervous readiness must be kept up to a high pitch, sits far up in his seat, behind the marble desks of the clerks, gavel in hand, like a man on a wagon-box, keeping in rein two hundred horses at once, and these horses — "fractious," or poorly broken — duck, break up, rear, neigh, or pull the wrong way, or lazily, while his gavel is flourished like a whip-handle without a lash. The disposition to draw blood, and the incapacity to do it, are very clearly expressed in his face, and therefore he brings the House to by a loud "Whoa!" Then he straightens them up with a cautious "Peddy—peddy—whoa! G'lang now!" Directly some stallion bounces off into a ditch, and the Speaker's "Gee, there, Mike!" or "Haw! haw! Tommy!" with dreadful indications of the broken whip-handle, coerce the team into some degree of good behavior.

In the cloak-room, some groups of Congressmen are smoking. Here and there on the floor of the House you see some one surreptitiously pulling at his cigar. Every lobbyist, who by hook or crook can get upon the floor, is traveling about between seats and sofas, with a sly, sidewise look, an express-train tongue, and a vigorous movement of his hand, gesturing on his private interest. Here is a member helping out some such lobbyist, introducing him round, pulling a group of folks





into the wash-room or side-lobby, all talking, hearing, suggesting, flying round like folks wrought up to the verge of despair. In the open space before the Speaker a score of anxious people assemble, ready to seize the Speaker's eye and gouge some proposition through it. Now vindictiveness is most alert to beat some hated rival or adverse interest in the dying hours of the session, as it has succeeded so well in doing during the bulk of the season. You can make intense studies wherever you look, as of two such hating and hated enemies watching each other. Here is Bellerophon, the member from Pascagoula, resolved to get his friend Shiftless, of the contested seat, through in the nick of time, for Shiftless has scarcely money enough to embark on the train for his home, and he hopes, by a decisive vote, to save all his back pay, settle his board bills, and have some spending money.

Bellerophon is on the floor, in the area, working his faith-fullest. He cries, "Mr. Speaker," in and out of time, feels his skin abraded by repeated failures, and the color, pale or red, rises alternately to his cheeks, while poor Shiftless stands off in pleading silence, saying short pieces of prayer between his need and his hypocrisy, like a man in a steamboat when there is inevitably to be a scuttling. Some distance off, Strike, the unappeasable enemy of Shiftless, lurks, with the light of revenge in his eyeball, and the phrase "I object!" upon his tongue, balanced like a man's revolver at full-cock. So they fight it out. So they stand arrayed—the old immemorial history of friendship, enmity, and hero, celebrated since literature could venture to portray anything. The morning hours advance; nature gives out, and all doze or sleep but these three, and many similar trios like them. At last even interest subsides, and he whose rights are being guarded, feels himself satiety, listlessness, inattention. He sleeps at his desk, while vigilant Friendship, keeping guard in the area with weary legs, cries steadily in all the pauses:

"Mr. Speaker, I believe I have the floor!"

"Mr. Speaker, you recognized me, I am sure, sir!"





Still Malice, with unsmoothable eyes, is ready with his cocked revolver, saying ever:

"I object!"

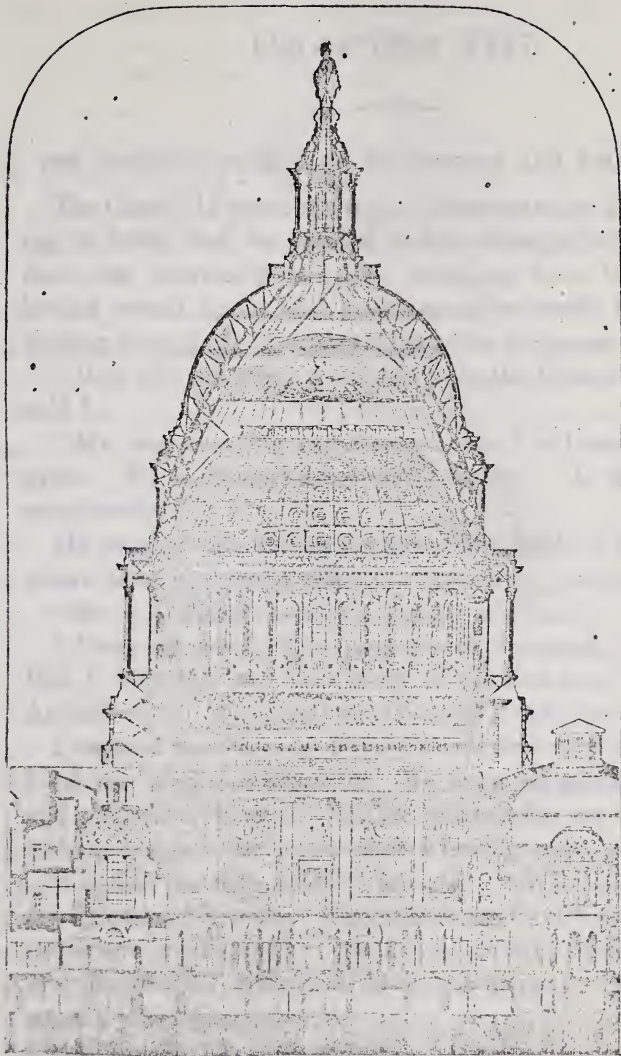
Even Friendship wearies in the end, and stopping in some empty perch to rest, feels the leaden weights upon its eyeballs, drive them slowly down. But when the interested one and his champion are quite overcome, still tireless and remorseless the Enemy looks out, bright and prepared, with the uncompromising—"I object!"

Knowing, as I did, the undertone of motive at the Capitol, I watched the last hours of the session on a Saturday with something of the sentiment of Lord Macaulay when he contemplated the Tower of London:

"They are associated with whatever is darkest in human nature and in human destiny, with the savage triumph of implacable enemies, with the inconstancy, the ingratitude, the cowardice of friends, with all the miseries of fallen greatness and blighted fame."

The same must be said of the latter days of the Senate, in executive session here, when enemies fall afoul of each other and slaughter each other's hopes of place between the decisive instants of triumph. It is the old, old story of Raleigh, Essex, and Sidney.









## CHAPTER XIII.

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### THE CHEERFUL PATRIOT IN WASHINGTON AND WHAT HE SAID.

The Cheerful Patriot arrived in Washington on a bright morning of 1868, that he seemed to have brought with him. His face was extremely amiable. Stepping from the depot, he looked round about him benignantly, evidently on the eve of bowing to anybody who would give him a chance.

"How did you enjoy your ride from the Western Reserve?" said I.

"My dear boy! it surpassed all that I had read of our progress. We have truly a wonderful country. Is that Willard's over yonder?"

He pointed with his stick to the yellow gable of Dyer's Hotel, where some brakemen and conductors were basking.

"No! Willard's is as big as forty of that!"

"Bless my soul! The progress of the people is wonderful. Did I ever tell you that story of the first hotel they built in Ashtabuley? Well, lead me along; I'll tell you all about it."

I enjoyed the Cheerful Patriot's anecdote very much, though I did not hear a word of it. He wore an ancient white hat, and a black cloth suit. Neither moustache nor bearded chin had he, but genuine whiskers of a healthy gray.

"Is that the City Hall?" he said. "Why, it's big enough for Solomon's Temple. The monument there looks like one of the seven candlesticks. Mr. Lincoln was a noble man! That Mr. Booth was truly a wild young person. But, then, we musn't judge each other."

"Here, Mr. Chase lives."

"Dear me! I voted for him way back in the fifties. I was never sorry for it. If it wishes him no harm, I am glad that



he lost the nomination this time, for I should hate to have voted against him. In point of fact," said the Cheerful Patriot, "I should like to have two votes: one of 'em I would give on election day, the other I would give after election, to soften the disappointment of the losing man. I'd give Mr. Seymour a vote a few days after this election—say a hundred years or two!"

To the Patent Office the Cheerful Patriot put on his spectacles and said that it was vast, even considering the number of patent medicines we had. The General Post-Office, he said with all reverence, was the Thirteenth Apostle.

"In my day," he alleged, "I sent a valentine to my wife, that was afterward, and by the lightning mail coach, she received it the following Fourth of July. Perhaps she wouldn't have had any more pleasure had it come earlier. There's compensation for all things."

At Willard's I apologized to the Cheerful Patriot, that there was no elevator. He said to Mr. Chadwick that an elevator might be a curiosity, but the grandeur of the establishment made its loss unnoticeable to any sturdy pair of legs. He was given a closet room on the fifth floor, for the clerk said, *sotto voce*, that he'd be derved if any man had any right to be so well satisfied at Willard's.

Said the clerk: "Nobody wan't ever quite satisfied here, and the Cheerful Patriot shan't be no exception!"

Said I to the Cheerful Patriot: "They allege in all the Washington hotels that it's better to keep a bad hotel than a good one. All being equally ill-kept, there is no choice, and nobody ever changes from one to the other, because it will be to discover different evils from those we are used to."

"My dear boy," replied the C. P., "all this is a vast improvement upon Washington, as I knew it forty years ago. Then we came by stage from Baltimore, paying three dollars hard cash, where we ride now in an hour or more, for twelve York shillings currency. The hotels were provincial, like those of all the country. The beef was all taken apparently from one inexhaustible ox, and the bread was made of corn meal, on all





but rare occasions. The servants were slaves and slow; the cooking utensils admitted of little haste; there were few facilities for expediting the food to the table. Go back to the contrivances of that time, from this gilded dining room to the white-washed walls, from smoking rolls to yellow pone, from free waiters to slaves! Be compensated in knowing that if this landlord does not do as well as he might, he at any rate pays his servants wages."

I look around me and I think I see politer manners, less deference perhaps, or less assumption, but more equal claims, more equally accorded. The faces of the people show better digestion, better food, less coarseness that used to pass for individualism.

"They drink, Cheerful Patriot! There is a great marble bar here; across the way is a nest of hungry gamblers, who watch the stranger and the dignitary, alike."

"These evils are sad," said the Cheerful Patriot, "but we were not rid of them in our days. Then the grosser liquors were set upon the private tables, and men talked in the heat of them. We elected Presidents by hard cider. Apple brandy, the parent of drunkenness, affected the head of the wisest. Whiskey was as patent, but the drink of Statesmen was raw brandy, a combative and violent liquor, that was the challenger and slayer in one-half the cases on the field at Bladensburg. Gambling is a low and concealed craft, to-day. It used to be part of hospitality here, and host plundered guest, and guest felt the injury. Then, indeed, women shared in it, taking cue from court-life abroad, and so aggravated their weaknesses with avarice and despair. My dear boy! many of us old men say better things of those days than we know, because they were our youth. Believe Cheerful Patriot when he tells you, that the new days are the best for the new men!"

"But the chaste Commandment is broken here, among the oftenest. Between the Avenue and the Smithsonian, on much of the 'Island,' in all localities, base and high, there are vile places shut up from daylight. It is not doubted that in some of the departments, stained women hide."





"Sadder! sadder still!" said the Cheerful Patriot, "but even to this sorrow there is hope! I remember in the days of slavery, that the planter came to Congress with his slave concubine and there was no scandal, because there was no law. The husband and father, Hamilton, closest friend of Washington, confessed that he had become a woman's victim to the extent of embarrassing his public accounts. Of Jefferson some men spoke no better; the times were lax; Virginia made the sentiment; New England made only the religion. A government clerk entrapped into a duel the brother of one he made a castaway, and the loss of his office was his only punishment. A woman's disputed fame turned out a cabinet. For Vice-President we had no better than Aaron Burr, whose path was strewn with young victims. In those days, as now, I was a Cheerful Patriot, seeing how more excellent were our public morals than those of any court in Christendom. I see woman still erring and man depraved, but the Capital is better. With these sad social questions even legislation is busy. Oh, no, my dear boy: in this pint there is no improvement!"

Here the Cheerful Patriot shook hands with the porter who handed him his hat, and asked if he could see the President's house.

"Bless my soul!" he said, "is that the United States' Treasury? It's an apocalypse in granite! Monoliths, are they, the pillars? They're strong for one stone, sure. This is a great country. The Treasury building is our *Sans souci*. Frederick the Great built his palace of that name to show the people how much money he had after the war. We build this to show how much debt we have. It indicates it splendidly, and the White House is truly the Palace Beautiful. I am glad to see the President with a good roof over his head! Takes ten thousand dollars a year to repair it! Well, that's not three per cent of the cost. See how figures come down when they are explained! You think the city sprawling, half built over, never to be finished? Why, it has arisen like a Phoenix since my last visit. They were twenty-five years building the old Capitol; the new



wings were finished in a very few. There's not a big church in Europe that three generations of men didn't work upon. If we expect to finish this nation, Capital and all, in eighty years, we shall leave nothing for our own boys to do. How much of a town was Paris eighty years after they begun it? The storks flew over Rome for the first century, unable to see it. The Washington monument is abandoned! Yes! but he'll grow in fame with every posterity. If we've done our work well, and it will only stand, somebody will come up to resume and finish it!"

Here we reach the Van Ness Mausoleum on H street.

"See this!" I said, "this cool old nook of private sepulture. Observe its venerable form and high grass that grows around it. Within sleeps one of the former mayors of this city, General Van Ness. He was a man of the old time; people speak reverently of him yet. Our fussy Wallachs and money-grubbing Bowens are very different!"

"Be just to the living as well as the dead," said the Cheerful Patriot; "all memories mellow by age. I know General Van Ness well. He was a New York city politician and came here as a Congressman when the city was a slough, the Capitol a scaffold, and the White House an ague-bed. The members fled to Georgetown to find board and lodging. They went in hacks or on horseback across the muddy landscape to sit in the unfinished Capitol, their sessions beguiled by the thud of trowel and hammer. At night they pined for company, and for want of it they drank, gambled, and did worse. Cock-fighting was common among the most eminent. It was an amusement of Washington itself. Prize-fighting of the spontaneous, rough-and-tumble sort, accompanied with the gouging out of eyes and the biting off of ears, was frequent; men were executed and statesmen looked on at the foot of Capitol Hill. At that time an ignorant, obstinate, canny Scotch farmer named Davy Burns lived in a farmhouse down by the fogs of the river. The location of the Capital City upon his grounds made him rich. To his crude shanty, young Congressmen pressed at night courting





for the heiress, and Van Ness, having the New York "dash," carried off Miss Marcia Burns. In your time this would be called a shoddy-wedding, turf-hunting, what-not. Shoddy and silk wear the same hue fifty years off. The Scotch girl made a good wife; the politician settled on his lands and rose to be mayor. One of his wife's cousins died in the poor-house, neglected. Now the family is extinct and the heiress to half the site of Washington lies under this fantastic mausoleum. If you had seen, as I have, the wild partisanship of General Van Ness for General Jackson, you would have ascertained that the race of politicians had somewhat improved. Justice to them all, my dear boy, good in their day, but the breed is bettering!"

"Cheerful Patriot!" I said, "see the despicable contest between the co-ordinate departments of our government! Review the Impeachment Trial! Consider that with the President of the United States one third of the public officers have broken social intercourse! Had you such discourtesy in old days?"

The Cheerful Patriot looked a little pained and said that I was looking too closely into the coal-hole of the ship. "You see the firemen and the sailors fighting," he said, "and lose heart in the steamer! Come on deck among the people. Why, my dear boy, I have seen the Vice-President of the United States preside over the Senate with the blood of the Secretary of the Treasury on his hands! I have seen the Vice-President, though of the same party, upon no terms of communication with the President. Andrew Jackson sat in Congress and refused to vote the thanks of that body to President Washington. Jefferson, in danger of being cheated out of the chief magistracy by Burr, prepared the Governors of two states to march with militia upon Washington. Jackson's retainers waylaid Congressmen as they quitted their chamber and left them for dead. The passions of individuals break out, but patriotism goes on."

"O! too Cheerful Patriot!" I said again, "there are two recent crimes new to our country and novel to your experience: Assassination! Rebellion!"



The Cheerful Patriot bent his white hat, and walked a long way, saying nothing.

"The great God has crooked ways for all great races," he said, "our only statesman whom murder ever aimed at was the best, and therefore the infamy of his taking off will find no future aspirants. In the shudder of all human kind the last of our braves perished with the first.

And rebellion was only an essential passage in the life of slavery, the ante-climax, where the terror is rolled up against the State to make the great *finale* glad with freedom. Lincoln was murdered when the first slave came! No, my dear boy! let us be cheerful patriots! The death of Lincoln lay back in the decrees of the insatiable demon of Slavery. What hope is there not for the land that could tear a tumor like this from its loins and live! Even for the rebel South there is hope. As Cheerful Patriots we must not cease to hope for the most remorseless. Firm to be merciful, distributing sympathy between our wayward elder brother and the new-born heir of freedom he has scourged, let us go forward cheerfully, proud of the present, confident of the future."

The Cheerful Patriot ascended the dome of the Capitol, wondering at every step, declaiming of the great country, and as he burst upon the panorama from the upper cupola, he shut his eyes with pious joy: "Move the Capitol!" he said, "it won't be the Cheerful Patriots that will do it these hundred years. If Richmond can outlive defeat and Washington expire with victory, how much will glory be quoted at by the square foot? My dear boy," he said, "this site is fine as Rome. It has already outlived almost as many perils. It has sheltered more virtuous rulers. It will ever be visited reverently whether we depopulate it or not. Looking down upon it as do we, following the solemn circle of those far bastioned hills, exploring the grey highway of its forked river, seeing it momentarily expand and flourish, and feeling the memories that possess it as well as the commemorations to come, what American will not be a grave and also a Cheerful Patriot.





## CHAPTER XIV.

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### TALK WITH THE OLDEST CITIZEN OF WASHINGTON—REMINISCENCES OF THREE-QUARTERS OF A CENTURY.

To talk with a man 89 years of age, who has passed all his life on one spot, and has a good memory for all the incidents respecting it, is in itself instructive. If your acquaintance should chance to have passed all his life on the site of the Capital City, and is able to recollect distinctly events between 1797 and 1873, you will converse with him with perhaps greater satisfaction than with the oldest denizen of any other town in America, because his experience will span the entire personal life of the nation.

There are in Washington several old men who recollect Gen. Washington. One of them is Noble Hurdle, of Georgetown, living at No. 176 High street, who is said to be 96 years old, and to have a grand-child past 40. Another, Christian Hines, I went to see a few days ago, who was 89 years of age, and was an object of curiosity for relic-hunters and people who wish to ask questions on old sites and points of interest. At the age of 82, he published at his own expense, a pamphlet of 96 pages, entitled "Early Recollections of Washington City;" but he was in very straitened circumstances, and the little book was not remunerative, so that much which he might have committed to print was allowed to go to waste. He had a clear apprehension, however, that, in his remarkable old age and keen memory, Providence had left him some dignity worth living for, in being of use to the future historians of the city. This consciousness lightened up his face, and seemed to give increased tenacity to his memory, for he would sometimes make flights of reminiscence, impelled by the strong desire of giving help





to literary folks, by which results were obtained as satisfactory to himself as to his hearers.

A visit. One blustering Sunday I sought the old man's tenement, on Twentieth street, between H street and Pennsylvania avenue. It was the last piece of property which he retained out of a large portion of the block which had belonged to his family, and here he had attended to an old furniture and junk-store as long as he was able to get about, but had finally been driven by rheumatism and increasing infirmities to the upper-story, where he resided in a lonely way with his niece, who was very deaf, and who shared the solitude and gave him some little help. The lower portion of the store was filled with everything quaint under the sun, and the loft where the old man lived consisted of three rooms without carpets or plaster, two of which were forward of a partition which divided the loft crosswise, and in one of these forward rooms Mr. Hines slept, and in the other had his frugal meal cooked. He lived almost wholly upon his pension of a few dollars a quarter, received from the Government for his services in the War of 1812, which he entered as a private, and became a Lieutenant at the time of the Battle of Bladensburg, in which he was engaged. In the same company appeared the names of the Bealls, Millers, Milburns, Shepherds, Goldsboroughs, and many other families well known in Washington.

Christian Hines was a fine-looking old man, and, old as he was, there was another brother, aged 93, resident in Washington, who, he said, was in much better health and memory than himself. This brother lived on Eleventh street near S. There were thirteen children in the family, whose common father had been an emigrant from Germany to Pennsylvania, and, by his partial knowledge of the English language, was recommended to an emigrant Captain as a proper person to procure a vessel load of people to come out of Maryland. With these emigrants, the elder Hines settled in Montgomery County, Md., about thirty years before the Revolution. He was, therefore, in Montgomery County when Braddock's army marched through it from Georgetown to Frederick. Christian Hines was brought up in Georgetown, which he describes as "pretty much of a



mud-hole" before the Capitol was built on the other side of Rock Creek.

His first recollection is that of going to see the President's House, which was then just rising above the basement story. He recollects that some cakes were bought for the children at a bake-house kept in a small frame building, which relied for custom upon the laborers who were building the White House.

At fourteen years of age he was put in a clothing store, which a Georgetown merchant established at Greenleaf's Point, and of this episode he gives a very complete account. He passed but one house from Georgetown and the President's, except two well-known blocks called the Six and Seven Buildings. The road led by F street to Eleventh, and thence across to the Island. There was not a single house on the Avenue from the President's to the Capitol. Many acres of elegant forest trees bordered the Avenue, on what is now the promenade side. An insecure crossway crossed Tiber Creek, with berries growing in the marsh close to the bridge; and the old man remembered the sweetness of those berries more than any of the prospects which might have been supposed to touch his imagination in the Government town. Across the bridge he plunged into the woods, and then, emerging, he saw that a vast plain of old fields extended to the river, with a few of the fruit trees of old farms standing up at places in it; and there were no houses in all the view, except some speculative edifices called the "Twenty Buildings," an old mansion, and some farmers' shanties, already condemned.

Settling the town. The store being a failure, young Hines went to school; next door to the house of the Rev. Stephen Balch, in Georgetown, until 1798. At this time, business got to be relatively brisk in Washington, and many strangers moved in. Some settled at the Navy Yard, a few about the Capitol, but the most about the Treasury Office, and along F street, beyond the Treasury, as far as St. Patrick's Church. The F street neighborhood got the most settlers, and to anticipate the removal of the Government from Philadelphia, Mr.





Hines' father, and his intimate friends in Georgetown, held a meeting and selected a spot for their future residences in Washington. They then removed from their large two-story log-house and frame attachment, and squatted near the Observatory. They had difficulties in getting water, as there were but few pumps. A part of the family began to work cutting timber in the white-oak slashes on the higher grounds of Washington, to build the Navy Yard wharf. The roads were wretched, and the boys had to haul the chips from the spot where the timber was cut to their distant house. Mr. Hines remembers with perfect distinctness the vessels discharging furniture, &c., for the Government edifices, at Lear's wharf on Tiber Creek; and carts were so scarce that his father's was impressed to remove boxes of books, papers, &c. He remembers that many of the boxes were marked "Joseph Nourse, Register." At this time, Mr. Hines remembers the north wing of the Capitol just rising out of the ground, and the President's House half a story high, and the only place between, with anything like the appearance of a village, was middle F street.

Where the General Post Office stands, there were a few laborers' shanties huddled around a great hulk of a hotel, called Blodgett's. There was no street opened across the city. Where Washington's statue now stands, at "The Circle," was the place for cock-fights and scrub races, where the laborers working on the public buildings used to have shillelah fights with the idlers of Georgetown. At the election between Jefferson and Adams, held at Suter's Tavern, Georgetown, there was a good deal of fighting and disputing in the rain and mud, and Lieutenant Peter, son of Robert Peter, who was a lieutenant in the regular army, and a connection of Washington, set one of his men to fighting with a Georgetown rough, by which the wounded soldier was made blind by the other man smearing his eyes with mud, and Mr. Hines remembers him led about the streets of Georgetown by a boy for years.



There were no druggists' stores in the city, and but few groceries, and a coarse country fair was kept up on the present Smithsonian grounds. The first tavern in the city was Betz's, in an old two-story frame between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets, with a swinging black horse sign. After this came Rhodes', Queen's, Davidson's, and Tunnecliff's, the first of which was at the corner of F and Fifteenth, the next two on the Avenue, and Tunnecliff's on Capitol Hill. Mr. Hines saw General Washington twice,—the last time in 1798, when he crossed the Potomac from the Virginia shore on a ferry-boat, near the present Aqueduct bridge, and walked down Water street, Georgetown, through rows of citizens uncovered like himself. He bowed to them as he passed on. The Georgetown College boys were all formed in a line, in uniforms of blue coats and red waistcoats. Washington was escorted by the volunteers of Georgetown, and as he crossed Rock Creek bridge, to enter the house of his nephew, Thomas Peter, the volunteers fired complimentary volleys. At another time, Mr. Hines remembers Washington coming up the Potomac in a sail-boat, and disembarking in Rock Creek, where there were semi-circular steps leading up the bank to Peter's house, where he made his home in the city, and which is still standing. Mr. Hines remembers John Adams in a line of men aiding to pass buckets of water to and fro from the burning of the first Treasury Building. He remembers Jefferson, as if it were yesterday, riding his horse through the city, wearing his hat down over his eyes, and with a blue-cloth double-breasted coat with gilded buttons. During Jefferson's first term, a freshet in the Potomac, and a sudden torrent of rain, which lasted a whole day, so raised the Tiber Creek that it flooded Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol gate to Sixth street, and made a river on the south side of the Avenue. Laborers on the Capitol building, wishing to get to their homes, attempted to wade this torrent, and were carried off their feet and floated down the stream, where they caught in the bushes and branches of trees, and held on perilously





through the whole night. Mr. Jefferson rode down to the spot on horseback, and offered \$15 a head for each man saved, and the use of his horse to anybody who would make the venture to rescue them.

Mr. Hines remembers Mr. Madison, with his hair powdered on all occasions, walking up F street, when Secretary of State, from his residence to the White House, where he kept his office. He remembers Mr. Monroe walking from the western part of the city to the White House, while Secretary of State, limping a little, and with his left side always foremost. He remembers the General Post Office when it was kept in the War Office building, along with the Patent Office, and has seen Mr. Gideon Granger enter his boarding-house in the "Seven Buildings."

In 1858, Christian Hines, and his brother, Matthew Hines, took advantage of the latter's confinement to his house to jot down together, from their united memories, all the early houses and families in the Capital. Matthew Hines died in 1863, and his brother, with pious industry, recorded their reminiscences.

The first roadway made on the Avenue was by cutting down the bushes and briars with scythes, and carting gravel, chips of freestone, and refuse from the new buildings to make a footway. The footways were made first, and the middle of the street filled and levelled afterward, until the whole resembled one of the army-roads made in Virginia during the War. Four rows of trees were planted down the Avenue in 1801, and Mr. Jefferson was frequently there, looking at an old man named Buntin setting out the Lombardy poplars. Jefferson was fond of going to the spot where all the improvements were made, and his poplar trees lasted for very many years; but it was rumored that they would not procreate, being female trees only. He remembers the forest trees growing in beautiful clusters on the site of Welcker's restaurant, and has passed through noble virgin groves in various parts of the city.





The Tiber Creek, now almost entirely filled in, was then a large sheet of water, clear and deep, great sycamore trees extending their roots beneath the banks; and he has seen scows, laden with marble and limestone, towed up the creek and fastened to the roots. Wild ducks would settle where the Centre Market now stands, so close to the shore that people used to throw stones at them; and he has seen flat-bottomed boats, at high tide, towed across part of the President's grounds; and at such times, David Burns' farm and house lay off like an island in the deluge. Mr. Hines does not clearly recollect that he ever saw Davy Burns, the owner of the farm on which the most important part of Washington was laid out. He is satisfied, however, from hearing people talk about Burns' former condition, that he had been poor, and, like the majority of the people of the region, was fond of ardent spirits, and often took too much. His jug had been known to come with much regularity to Georgetown to be filled with whiskey, and this fact led to much unneighborly comment when, after some years, the farmer's fine daughter, Marcia, rode over to the burgh to have her dresses fitted. Burns' farm extended from the present Van Ness mansion to the Mausoleum, where he was afterwards buried (on H street, near Ninth), and thence to the Centre Market, on the Tiber. It therefore included the site of the new State Department, Winder's Building, the Corcoran Art Gallery, the White House, the Treasury, the most valuable lands afterward built over by Corcoran and others, the Centre Market-house, Willard's Hotel, and the most valuable parts of the Avenue.

Mr. Hines remembers the execution of McGirk, a wife murderer, at the foot of Capitol Hill, early in Jefferson's Administration; and he attended the first play ever acted in the city, where Joseph Jefferson and Junius Brutus Booth acquired much of their art. The play was given in the shell of Blodgett's unfinished hotel,—that Blodgett who had proposed to Jefferson to habilitate a whole street with houses,—on the Post Office Hill, in 1802. Hines and the boys sucked



their way into the hotel by getting into the basement, and removing loose boards from the floor.

I asked the old gentleman to tell me how the stone from Acquia Creek was raised up Capitol Hill. He said that it was taken as far up the Tiber Creek in scows as possible, and then run up a sort of platform railway,—the hoisting done from the summit.

The Potomac channel was formerly on the Virginia side of Mason's Island, and on that side an emigrant vessel direct from Europe landed passengers in the early days, many of whom gave respectable families to Washington. Mr. Hines keeps in his room the portraits of Lorenzo and Peggy Dow, whom he knew very well, and saw Lorenzo's grave many a time, in Holmead's burying-ground, at Twentieth and Boundary streets, the bodies from which were removed within my own memory. He has heard Lorenzo preach in the old Hall of Representatives, many Congressmen listening. Mr. Hines remembers ten old and now extinct grave-yards on the site of Washington,—one of which (Pearce's) covered a part of Lafayette Square, and was an attachment of an apple-orchard. Pearce was a saddler at Georgetown, and a teacher beyond the Eastern Branch. Where his old farm-house and orchard stood, the finest part of Washington is now established. Jenkins' farm adjoined the Patent Office site. Funk's property—the house built of small imported Holland brick—covered Observatory Hill.

Mr. Hines listened at Decatur's window, with other persons, in 1819, and heard the low, dying groans of that gallant sailor. "With the poor people of Washington," he said, "Decatur was not as popular as with the rich; yet there was a certain austerity about him. He would fight duels, but he was brave enough without that."

Mr. Hines family bought a farm from Dr. Thornton, the architect of the Capitol, and had to forfeit it for want of funds to make the final payments. The farm stood out near the foot of Meridian Hill. He also invested, with his brother,





\$900 in the Potomac Canal Company, and lost it, and dug a spadeful of earth at the Little Falls, with the spade John Quincy Adams had just used. He remembers Adams going into swim, as he was wont, near the present Monument grounds; and there is a tradition that the President once had his garments stolen while swimming, and was compelled to get to the Executive Mansion in a somewhat undignified state of nudity.

He remembers when General James Wilkinson had his headquarters on the Observatory Hill, and also the arrival of the first steamboat at the city wharves, the stages running to Fredericktown, as they do no longer, and the maintenance of a regular sail-ferry over the Potomac at Georgetown. The old gentleman showed me a beautiful etching of John Randolph, who had bought a lot and put up a house on the Hines property,—which house burned down afterward—and stated that a lady had made the picture by improving the opportunity of Randolph's daily trip along the Avenue. He is represented with long, bony legs and thighs, and shallow chest—a mere skeleton—and riding a splendid-blooded animal, whose sleekness is in strong contrast to *his* meagerness. Randolph's cap is pulled down over his eyes, like a student's green patch; but he rides like a natural Virginia hunter.

Such were some of the recollections of this feeble, stalwart old man, who sat before me, with a high black cravat, veins large, and feebly moving in the hands and throat; gray but abundant hair, and gray whiskers of a healthy hue. He looked poor, but not in need—poor chiefly in days, which he counted without apprehension, saying, "The Almighty means to send for me very soon now."

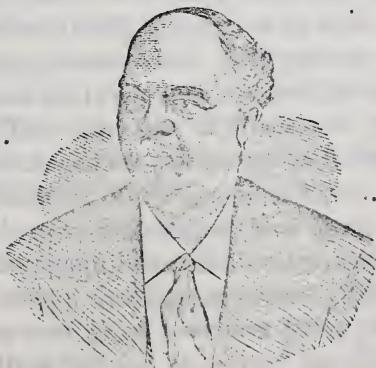


## CHAPTER XV.

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### STYLE, EXTRAVAGANCE, AND MATRIMONY AT THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT.

Dining in Washington is a great element in politics. The lobby man dines the Representative; the Representative dines the Senator; the Senator dines the charming widow, and the charming widow dines her coming man. For reed birds the politician consults Hancock, on the avenue; for oysters, Harvey; and for an ice or a quiet supper, Wormly or Page; but there is no dinner like Welcker's. He possesses an autograph letter from Charles Dickens, saying that he kept the best restaurant in the world. He has given all the expensive and remarkable dinners here for several years; and talking over the subject of his art with him a few days ago, we obtained some notions about food and cooking at Washington.



JNO. WELCKER.

Welcker is said to be a Belgian, but he has resided in New York since boyhood, and he made his appearance in Washington at the beginning of the war as steward of the seventh regiment. He is a youthful, florid, stoutish man, with a hearty address, a ready blush, and a love for the open air and children. Every Summer he goes down the Poto-

mac, shutting his place behind him, and there he fishes and shoots off the entire warm season, wearing an old straw hat





and a coat with only one flap on the tail. Nobody suspects that this apparition of Mr. Winkle is the great caterer for the Congressional stomach. Nobody imagines that this rustic is the person whose sauces can please even Mr. Sam. Ward, that distinguished observer for the house of Baring Brothers. Nobody knows—not even the innocent and festive shad—that this Welcker is John Welcker, who came to Washington during our civil broil, drew and quartered for Provost Marshal Fry, fed all the war ministers, and gave that historic period the agreeable flavor of Mushrooms.

In the early days of Washington, entertainments other than family ones were given at the taverns, some of which, as Beale's, stood on Capitol Hill. Afterward Mrs. Wetherill, on Carroll Row, set especial dinners, breakfasts, and suppers to order. In later times Crutchett on Sixth street, Gautier on the Avenue, and Thompson on C street, established restaurants *a la carte*. Gautier sold out to Welcker, who had such success during the war that he bought a large brick dwelling on Fifteenth street, near the Treasury, and at times he has leased several surrounding dwellings, so that he kept a hotel in fact, though without the name. Welcker has a large dining room, eighty feet long by sixteen feet wide, with adjustable screens, adapting it to several small parties, or by their removal to make one large dining room, which will seat one hundred people. Welcker's main lot is one hundred and thirty-three by twenty-five feet.

The character of Welcker's entertainments is eminently select, and his prices approach those of the English *Castle and Falcon*, or of Philippe's in Paris. His breakfasts and dinners *a la carte* are about at New York rates, less than those of the Fourteenth Street Delmonico, and matching the St. James and Hoffman restaurant prices. The most expensive dinners he has ever given have cost \$20 a plate. Fine dinners cost from \$10 to \$12 per plate, and breakfast from \$5 to \$8 per plate. He has fed between six and seven hundred people per diem, as on the day of Grant's inauguration. His best rooms rent at \$8 a day, and consist of a suite of three rooms, but the habit-





ants thereof pay the establishment for food, wine, &c., not less than \$50 a day.

Welcker's chief cook is an Italian Swiss, obtained from Martini's, New York,—the same who distinguished himself at Charles Knapp's great entertainment in 1865, the cost of which was \$15,000. Welcker supplied the food for Mr. Knapp's last entertainment, in 1867, at the I St. mansion, now occupied by Sir Edward Thornton. There are five cooks in all at Welcker's, and the establishment employs thirty servants. During the past session he has given at least two dinner parties a day, averaging twelve guests at each, and each costing upwards of \$100.

The best fish in the waters of Washington is the Spanish mackerel, which ascends the Potomac as high as Wicomico river. They come as late as August. and bring even five dollars a pair when quite fresh.

Brook trout, propagated artificially, Welcker thinks lack flavor. He obtains his from Brooklyn, but says that there are trout in the Virginia streams of the Blue Ridge.

Freezing-boxes, or freezing-houses, such as are established in Fulton Market, New York, do not exist in Washington. These keep fish solid and pure for the entire season. The inventor of them is a Newfoundland man, and he proposes to put them up in Washington for \$300 a piece.

Welcker says that the articles in which the District of Columbia excels all other places are celery, asparagus, and lettuce. The potatoes and carrots hereabouts he does not esteem. The beef is inferior to the Virginia mutton, which he thinks is the best in the world—better than the English Southdown. Potomac snipe and canvas-back ducks Welcker thinks the best in the world, and the oysters of Tangier, York river, and Elizabeth river he considers unexcelled by any in the world. The Virginia partridge and the pheasant,—which are the same as the northern quail and the partridge,—Welcker also holds to be of the most delicious description.

Our markets, he says, are dearer than those of New York



and Baltimore, and less variously and fully stocked. The market system here requires organization, being carried on by a multitude of small operators who are too uninformed about prices to institute a competitive system, and hence it often happens that potatoes are sold at one place for \$1.50 a bushel, and somewhere near by for only fifty cents a bushel. His market bill will average during the session, \$600 a week, and sometimes rises to \$800 a day.

The most expensive fisheries on the Potomac rent for about \$6,000 a year. Messrs. Knight & Gibson, who have the Long Bridge fishery, opposite Washington, paying \$2,000 a year for it, pay also \$6,000 for a fishery near Matthias Point, about seventy miles down the Potomac. Knight & Gibson keep a fish stand in the Center market.

The first shad which reach the North come from Savannah, and bring in the month of February as much as \$6 a pair. Alexandria is the chief mart for saving and salting shad. Gangs are often brought from Baltimore, Frederick, and Philadelphia to man the shad boats, and five miles of seine are frequently played out. The black bass in the Potomac river were put in at Cumberland several years ago, and have propagated with astonishing fecundity. How much nobler was the experiment of this benefactor of our rivers than the wide spread appetite for destructiveness we see everywhere manifested.

The most expensive dish furnished by Welcker is Philadelphia capon *au sauce Goddard*, stuffed with truffles, named for the celebrated surgeon Goddard of Philadelphia. The best capons come from New Jersey, but good ones are raised in the region of Frederick, Md. The capon is probably the most delicious of domestic fowls, attaining the size of the turkey, but possessing the delicate flesh and flavor of the chicken. Truffles cost eight dollars a quart can, and four dollars and a-half the pint can. They come from France and North Italy, and grow on the roots of certain trees. Truffle dogs and boars are used to discover them, and the boars wear wire muzzles to keep them from eating the precious parasites. Truffles look





like small potatoes, except that they are jet black through and through.\* The capon is boiled and served with white-wine sauce and with sweet breads.

Take next for an example the prices which we receive in the Arlington, which is a small hotel, with a capacity for no more than three hundred and twenty-five persons.

Senator Cameron paid for himself and wife \$450 per month, and had but two rooms. Senator Fenton had a parlor, two bedrooms, and an office, and paid \$1,000 per month. Mr. S. S. Cox and wife, paid \$250 per week, and he gave a buffet supper, for one hundred persons, which cost him \$1,500. Mr. W. S. Huntington, gave the Japanese the finest spread ever set in the Arlington Hotel; there were only twenty persons, and he paid \$1,000. Dr. Helmbold paid \$96 per day, and his bill for two weeks was about \$1,600. A parlor, and three bedrooms in the second story of the Arlington, with a small family occupying them, are worth \$450 per week, during the season; and one guest here pays for a parlor, bedroom, and bathroom, \$300 per month.

At the Delevan House, Albany, Dr. Gautier used to pay \$375 per week, and General Darling, with a parlor, three bedrooms, and four persons, paid \$400. The hotel at Lake George, had 37,000 on the register last season, in four months; it took in that space of time \$294,000, and the net profits were \$52,000.

The Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York, rents for \$200,000 a year, including the stores beneath it. The St. Nicholas rents for \$95,000, although it cost but \$425,000. Mr. A. T. Stewart has just rented to William M. Tweed, the Metropolitan Hotel, New York, for \$65,000 a year, to put his son, Richard Tweed, into business as a landlord; and the Lelands, who go out, paid \$75,000.

The cheapest piece of hotel property, in point of rent, in this country, is the Brevoort House, New York, which rents for \$27,500, and has three owners; it is kept on the European plan, excepting the *table d' hôte*, which it does not keep up, as it has made its reputation on the best *cuisine* in the world.



One evening in 1870 the Capitol of the nation did itself credit, by heartily welcoming one of the young sons of the Queen of England. The opportunity was a ball given by the British Minister, Thornton, to Prince Arthur, probably with the original motive of making his visit agreeable to the young man, by showing him the pretty girls in their most becoming dresses, and giving him a convenient chance to speak to them, as a young man likes to speak to a fine girl, intimately, and agreeably. Nothing has ever been invented like a dance, to bring the young folks together. The story of Cinderella's slipper turns, upon going to the Prince's ball; and I suppose that, so long as human nature remains what it always has been, Princes' balls will be popular, and Princes the type of all that is noble and exalted. Jones is called the prince of caterers, and Simon the prince of sleeping-car conductors, and if the term be a compliment when it has no reality in it, how really infatuating must be a true Prince, born of the Queen, peer above the highest, with jealous mysteries of blood, and a birthright which will keep respect and inspire superstition, long after its wearer is broken down in character, and ruined in purse. The most decided Republican and Democrat, though he may sneer at Princes and deprecate attention to them, is apt to feel the strange magnetism of the name and the office, for it is an admonition of antique times and government, a word of spell, signifying to the ear at least, the issue of those whose love and nuptials affected a realm, a period, or a world. This Prince is still a Prince, though not a powerful one—a far-off son, with elder brothers between him and a throne,—and perhaps he has had reason to feel the distance at which he stands from favor; therefore, it was gentle in us, who had treated his high-born brother with such opulence of incense and favor, to be no colder towards young Arthur. His father and mother were exceptionally chaste, as affectionate as wife and man in two sensual and selfish lives could be. His mother wrote with her hand, a letter of sympathy to the widow of our most precious President. The office of Prince in our day is reduced to such small political





figure, that we could do no harm to monarchy, by showing republican bad manners to this young gentleman. And we owe it to our high place amongst nations to do cheerful hospitality to any Prince or ruler, well-behaved, who comes amongst us with frank confidence in our good will and good breeding.

I write this down, because it is always easy and tempting to sneer at Princes; and when this young man came to the Capital, I had an itching to say something that would make you laugh about him. There is really no reason, however, for any disparagement, because the good sense of our guest and our people, has been displayed during his visit. If any low fellow has said anything coarse in his presence, I have not heard of it. He has been subjected to a round of official dinners and receptions, which I would not have passed through for a hundred dollars a day, and he has kept himself patient and obliging all the time. More than that, he is a young man, and can't help being a Prince. So good luck to him!

Mrs. Thornton, like the first walking lady in a comedy, gathered up her *moire antique* dress with the satin trail, close to the blue satin panier, and surrounded with Apollos\* of legation, each looking like a silver-enamelled angel out of a valentine, accomplished the descent of the stairs, treading all the way upon scarlet drugget, and helped by the laurel-entwined balusters.

At the foot was the Prince, dressed in the uniform of the British Rifles,—dark sack coat, double-breasted, buttoned to the throat, and well trimmed and frogged along the lappels; tight, dark-colored pantaloons, with a stripe, strapped over patent leather boots; a steel-sheathed dress sword, at his side; an infantry cap in his hand; a little cartridge box, like a tourist's glass, strapped across his shoulder; and what shone and flashed like a streak of day-light through him, was a huge jewelled star, the insignia of the Garter. This latter, perhaps the symbol of the highest nobility in Christendom, was more observed than the clear skinned, rosy face of the young man, his brown hair, good teeth, and obedient and intelligent eye.





His clothes clung almost as closely to him as his skin, and while he was one of the most plainly-dressed persons conspicuous upon the floor, this fact alone made him somewhat eminent. There was that, besides, which gave him beauty and character beyond the star that threw a hundred sheets of light every way he turned; the fine distinction of ruddy youthfulness, made modest and interesting by being placed in such prominence. If a young man knows how to feel publicity, and yet bear himself well under it, so that there is a nice mingling of self-reliance and sensitiveness, the effect upon a crowd is to get him hearty sympathy—the next thing to admiration.

Arthur gave Mrs. Thornton his arm, and escorted her to the ball room. The Cupids out of the valentines, the Prince's followers, and all the rest of the little suite and embassy joined in behind, making quite a spangled procession, as if the gas fixtures were going to a party in company with the window curtains. As they all came along together, gold ramrod and satin drapery, the band in the gallery struck up, "God save the Queen!" Then the people sitting in cane chairs on both sides of the long hall stood up, and ceased waving their fans. The shoe blacks and darkeys in the street below, looked up at the flaming windows, and said interjections, and danced steps of involuntary jigs, and said out of their malicious little spirits: "Shoo Fly."

Arthur, with Mrs. Thornton still on his arm, walked the whole length of the hall to the carpeted platform, when he turned about, and waited modestly till the music ceased. Then he shook hands with many folks standing round, whom he remembered, or thought he did. Elphinstone, his aid, was covered all over with medals of daring, gained probably, by such victories as this, and he wore the gorgeous uniform of his red-complexioned nation. Picard, another aid, wore the English artillery uniform. They looked well, as Englishmen look—a sort of stiffened-up suggestion of manhood, with indications of skye terrier fringing out.

One of the romances of Washington city was recently enacted



in the Diplomatic Corps. For nearly thirty years Baron Gerolt served the interests of Prussia at Washington city, and he lived long enough to rear native-born American children under the shadow of the Capitol, one of whom married Mr. Rangabe, the Greek minister. Gerolt owed his appointment to this country to Baron Humboldt, who had been entertained by him while *chargé* in Mexico, and who recommended him to the King of Prussia. Gerolt was an affable, republican sort of man in society, fond of the American people, and his social associates were men like Charles Sumner and others, who inclined him towards the Federal side in the war of the rebellion. He probably got considerable credit for original principle during the war, when he was really subordinate to acquaintances of a stronger will, who impressed the claims of the North upon him. It is charged that, at home, he was somewhat tyrannical with his family, as is the German custom: and that he and his wife wished to assert too much authority over their children, who had inhaled the breath of the Western hemisphere. Whatever the interior side of his life might have been, Gerolt is remembered enthusiastically by some of the best people in Washington, Republicans and Democrats alike. He resides at Linz, near Bonn, in Rhenish Prussia, and is permanently out of the diplomatic service of North Germany.

The Gerolts, although Germans, are Catholics, and the girls were strictly brought up under the tuition of the priests at Georgetown. Bertha, the youngest daughter of the Baron, now about twenty-three years of age, and a very rich and handsome type of the young German girl, fell in love, three or four years ago, with her father's Secretary of Legation, a tall, handsome, dashing and somewhat reckless Prussian, and a connection or relative of Bismarck. This young Secretary belonged to a fine old Brandenburg Protestant family, which had decided notions against forming Catholic alliances. The young gentleman would have fallen heir, in time, to large estates in North Prussia; but these were in some manner, as it is stated, made conditional upon his keeping up the ancestral Lutheran faith.





This young Prussian chap, you may recollect as being the antagonist of one of our ministers, Lawrence of Central America, some two or three years ago, when the two met on what is called the field of honor, exchanged shots, and then patched up the fight without bloodshed. He paid court to Bertha Gerolt, and she was intensely enamored of him. In order to make the nuptials easy on both sides, Gerolt applied to the Catholic Church authorities for an indulgence, or something, warranting the marriage of this hereditary Protestant with his Catholic daughter; but as it was specified that the children issuing from such marriage were to be brought up Protestants, the Roman dignitaries refused. Gerolt, who appears sincerely to have wished to please his child, had also intentions upon the Pope; but while these ecclesiastical efforts were being made, the domestic correspondence between the Secretary and his mother in Germany, and some ensuing letters from Madame, growing warmer and more indignant from time to time, had the effect of racking the poor girl's feelings; and, in the end, the handsome Prussian went home. This is an end to the matter up to the present. Bertha Gerolt refused to accompany either her father or mother to Germany, and has retired to the Georgetown Convent, where, some say, she will take the last veil; and others that she will repent after a while, and reappear in the world.

Opinion is divided in this city as to why Gerolt was remanded to his own country. Some say that he suffered certain indignities at the hands of our State Department. Others allege that he was insufficient particularly about the time that American arms were shipped to France to be used against the Prussians. It is said that, on that occasion, Bismarck asked Mr. Bancroft why our government permitted such things; and Bancroft, to make it easy for himself, retorted that there was Baron Gerolt in Washington, and, if he had been attending to his business, the arms would have been detained. Others say that Catacazy drew Gerolt into an intrigue, and got him to work against the late treaty which we made about the Alabama claims. What-



ever the facts, the Baren has gone for good, and his admirers here are preparing to forward him an elaborate service of silver, to show that what he did for the country in its crisis is remembered at least by its private citizens.

You have many a pretty girl in the West who would be excited if the prospect were held out to her of marrying the Portuguese Secretary of Legation. Yet a Portuguese person of nearly that description was content to marry a negro girl the other day, at the Capital to which he was accredited. The Peruvian minister's wife was raised here; and the former Russian minister married the pretty daughter of a boarding-house keeper at Georgetown. Yet were any of them happier, or even richer? I doubt it much. One New Year's day I saw a beautiful woman, reared here, who is soon to go to Russia for life, and consort with candle eaters in a cold empire where the flag that was the pride of our babyhood does not float, where the music and the language we love is not spoken, and middle age, and old age, and her children must be given to a people who can never know her like her countrymen. It is strange to see women deluded into these alliances by some high fangled echo of a word, or a fashion-plate. As a rule, these foreigners accredited to the Capital of the United States are either politicians of the third class around the governments of their countries, or courtiers of the third class. An European courtier, reduced to his essentials, is a pleasing politician around his Capital, pressing to be provided for, fed, and rewarded. He has passed through the same straights, shrewnesses, and triumphs as an American politician, held up somebody's coat tail, been somebody's brother-in-law, owed his appointment to the pretty face of a sister, or he has written up the side of some patron, in a pamphlet or newspaper, and crowded all sail to be furnished with an exchequer in other parts. When an American girl, therefore, marries "a member of the foreign legation," she marries merely a politician or a noodle who can speak only bad English, who probably marries her for her money or for his *ennui*, and who is habituated to having mistresses at home.





I am not speaking of anybody, nor of everybody, in the foreign legations at Washington, when I thus produce the comparative light of fact and experience upon them; but as a general rule, I would not take a turn next door, to see a member of legation.

We know, by observation upon him at home,—that being in a white and gold cocked hat, a sword, a ruffled shirt, and a pair of scarlet and gold trousers, who came up before the President on the first day of the year, and bowed, and left his royal master's condescensions.

It was with such feelings,—while recognizing many reverend and excellent gentlemen among the foreign ministers at a levee, and several persons of talent and pursuit,—that I ran my eye along the gaily attired line,—the romance of the name, and the livery gone from my mind; while at the head of our State, in plain black, stood the little General who fought bigger battles than any of their Kings, and commanded a nation of men with more destiny than all their combined States possessed antiquity.

The mystery and magic of the foreign service and uniform, are kept alive entirely by our American women. We men do not believe in them. If Miss Jane Smith, or the widow Tompkins, marries Signor Straddlebanjo, she ascends, in the female mind, to the seventh heaven of respect, while eating yet the same pork chops, and taking milk from the same pump and milkman.

Many of these gentlemen have found good wives and comfortable homes among us. You are aware that the famous French Minister, Genet, set this example early, by retreating from the contempt of Washington, and the frown of Jefferson, into the bosom of the Clinton family, and never returned to France at all. That famous old rooster married three times, if I am well informed, in the United States, and some time ago, when I was introduced in New York to a lawyer and city politician named Genet, I said to him musingly:

“Why! that was the name of the great *lettre de marque* Frenchman!”





"My grandfather!" replied the politician of Tammany Hall.

When Mr. Johnson shoved his friend, the Adjutant-General, through the tenure-of-office act, he had little idea how he was hastening the marriage ceremony of little Bibbapron: Bibbapron had fixed his engagement day for the first of July, so as to be in New York on the Fourth, and set off some firecrackers, after which he expected to make some good resolutions to regulate family life at Saratoga Springs. But people who are engaged, are always impatient. They are left alone together a good deal, and find waiting to be a sort of dissipation. It is neither pursuit nor possession, neither fish nor flesh. It is the tenderest, most quarrelsome, most tantalized, most disheartened, most forebode-ful period of love. No wonder that Bibbapron, when he heard of the "High Court of Impeachment," the solemnity of the spectacle, and the great learning of the managers and counsel, had but to suggest to Molly what a delightful time it would be to visit Washington, when she embraced himself, and the occasion. The milliner was hurried up. Ma was persuaded that Summer was an unhealthy season in the East. The little marriage ceremony was not held in the church, but in the parlor at home, and the clergyman's fee reduced somewhat in consequence. Bibbapron's papa gave his son a letter to Congressman Starch, and the express train saw the pair tucked in, the last tear shed, and the town of Skyuga fade from the presence of its prettiest girl. It is to tell all the engaged folks how to get to Washington and how to see it, that I reluctantly took Mrs. Bibbapron's diary and copy a few pages from it. They are strictly accurate, for which the other correspondents don't care to use\* them. Mrs. Bibbapron has a way of italicising every other word in diary, which I don't care to imitate, and she makes a very pretty period with a tear, which, of course, I cannot do. The diary was a present from her younger sister; it had an almanac in it and blank washing lists, with quotations from the poets under each date. Here it begins:

"April 22, 1868—Dear me, how tired! I am in Washington, the Capital of the United States. It's not larger than New



York, my husband, Alonzo, says, which I think is a great shame. Government ought to make it bigger right away, or have it somewhere where it would get bigger, itself. The maps are all incorrect about Washington, where it is represented by a great many dots, while all the other towns have only one dot. We went to Willard's Hotel, and, in order to give us a fine view of the city, they put us up in the top story. We went down to breakfast at nine o'clock, and called for oysters, of course. They tasted as if they had been caught in warm water. The fresh shad was quite a bone to pick. My dear husband took a cocktail before breakfast. He says it's quite the thing here. Senator Tatterson joined him, he says. I hope my husband will never be a drunkard!"

N. B.—He says the Senator took *his* straight.

Half-past ten o'clock.—Alonzo, my darling husband, has been to see Congressmen Starch, and brought him into the ladies' parlor. Pa can't abide Congressman Starch, because they differ in politics; but Alonzo's Pa is a Republican, and lent Mr. Starch a horse and wagon to bring up voters. I think it was very generous of the Congressman to ask so particularly about Pa's health. He gave me two tickets for the great trial. He says they are very scarce, and old ones are sold for reliefs for ever so much money. The managers buy the old ones to paste their photographs on them, and present them to the Historical Societies. Congressman Starch says he lost his best constituent to give me these tickets, but told me to be particular not to tell Pa about it. He says Johnson is the great criminal of the age, and ought to have been impeached before he was born. There is no doubt, he says, that it was Johnson in disguise who murdered Mr. Lincoln, and then bribed Booth with a clerkship to be killed in his place. He says that General Butler offers to prove that Boston Corbett was only Andrew Johnson, who killed Booth to keep him from telling. Poor Booth! He died saying 'Poor Carlotta!' I never sing that song but tears come to my eyes, and I think of my husband. Alonzo will never kill the President. He was brought up a Baptist.





Five o'clock, P. M. I have seen all the great patriots of our country. Mr. Sumner is the greatest of them all, his hair is so exquisite. Mr. Brooks, of New York, who gave him such a beating, was on the floor of the Senate, wearing spectacles. He is a newspaper editor, and drives a pair of cream-colored horses. He must be a dreadful man, but is right good looking. Mr. Sumner forgives him, because he prints his speeches.

I am going too fast, but really, I have so much to do to-day, that I don't know where to begin. We took the horse cars to the Capitol, and went along Pennsylvania Avenue. The National Hotel looks sick, ever since the celebrated disease there. I was surprised to see so many negroes in the car. Congress compels them to ride, in order to carry out the Civil Rights bill. The poor souls look dreadfully as if they wanted to walk some. Dear me! I love to walk since I am married. I can take my husband's arm then and pinch him. It seems to me that we ain't happy unless we pinch those we love!

The Capitol is the grandest, most wonderful building in the whole world. It is all marble, with a splendid dome above it, and a perfect hide-and-seek of aisles, passages, and gorgeous stairways. It looks like a marble quarry in blossom. They wash it every night, and the government officers spit it yellow every day. Alonzo says tobacco is bought by the ream, and charged to "stationery." He says that this is quite right, because when the members have a chew in their mouths they speak less and save time. I hope my husband will never chew tobacco. Government ought to pass a law against it, and get the women to enforce it. On the top of the Capitol is a statue of Pocahontas, flying a kite; I should think it ought to be Benjamin Franklin, but they have got him inside in marble. It will take millions and millions to furnish the Capitol. I suppose they will have nothing but Axminster carpets and oiled walnut. In the dome of the Capitol there are beautiful pictures. I liked the marriage of Pocahontas the best. She wears her hair plain, and her dress looks like a bolster case. The



Indian women have beautiful figures but their clothes are dowdy. Some of them in this picture wear goose feathers for full dress, and look to have caught cold. But that's what's expected of a bridesmaid. She dresses for a consumption!

We got good seats next to the Diplomatic Gallery. Alonzo pointed out the Russian Minister and his wife to me; we admired them very much till we heard that it was the Minister's Coachman and cook. The foreign Ministers send their servants here when they want their gallery to look genteel. Theodore Tilton was distinguished by his long hair. He has withdrawn the nomination of Chase, and ruined the Chief-Justice. He looks sad about it. Congressman Starch showed us the Chief-Justice, a man like Washington in holy orders. Mr. Starch said he would be impeached soon with all the Judges. The Bench, he says, is rotten. (Why not give them chairs?) He said if it had not been for the Bench, the constitution, which is the cause of all this trouble, would have been done away with long ago. Dear me! an old rotten bench ought not to keep our country in such peril. The Senate Chamber is all buff and gilt, like an envelope on Valentine's day. There is a silver ice pitcher on the table of the President's counsel, which I believe is plated. I wish I could just go down and feel of it. They say that the Government is swindled in everything. Perhaps the coolest swindle is ice pitchers. This is mean. Washington, Webster, and Mr. Starch must be incapable of it. If my husband ever comes to Congress I mean to work him a pair of slippers in red, white, and blue. Then he can't go across the street, like Mr. Alwusbeery to drink between votes, in his stocking feet.

I saw Mrs. Southworth, the great novelist, author of the "Deserted Step-Mother." She lives at Georgetown in a haunted boarding-house. Her health is good, considering what must be her distress of mind, say two hundred pounds without jewelry. Her dress was a black silk, tabs on the mantilla, and angel-sleeves, so as to leave space to swing her beautiful pen. If I could write like Mrs. Southworth, I would keep





Alonzo, my darling husband, sitting at my feet in tears all the time.

Mrs. Swizzlem, the colored authoress of Mrs. Keekley's book, was in the diplomatic gallery with one of Mrs. Lincoln's dresses on, counting through an opera glass the pimples on the face of one of the Senators. She hates his wife, Alonzo says, and means to worry her.

Mr. Thornton, the British Minister, looks very much worried. Congressman Starch says that Senator Chandler is a Fenian, and means to make a dreadful speech at poor Mr. Thornton. Alonzo is afraid it will miss fire, and kill some innocent person. Senator Wade, the next President, looks like Martha Washington. He is a very pious man, beloved by everybody, and would have become a preacher if they had not wanted him so bad for President.

Twelve A. M! Oh, dear! that ever I was married! Be still, my poor soul! I have heard of the wickedness of men—now I know it! Last night I heard something like a wheelbarrow coming up stairs. It seemed to fall around the elbows and upset at all the platforms. It tumbled right up to my room. The wheelbarrow burst right through the door; first came the wheel and then pitched the barrow on top of it. The barrow was Congressman Starch, the wheel was—Alonzo. They joined themselves together again and wheeled forward, right up onto the bed. There were so many legs and so much motion and hallooing that I could not tell my husband from the other. I said, however:

“Merciful Heavens!”

To this replied my husband, in terms like the following:

“Johnsing's gone up. Starchy threw cashting vote. Mime going tee be Conshul-General under Ben Wade—all hunk!”

Said a voice, proceeding, as I conjectured, from the owner of that pair of legs which did not wear Alonzo's trowsers:

“Yesh! bet your Impartial Justice according to zhee laws. Mime going ter be Secretary thintceryer!”

I rang the bell and wept. The waiters removed the Con-





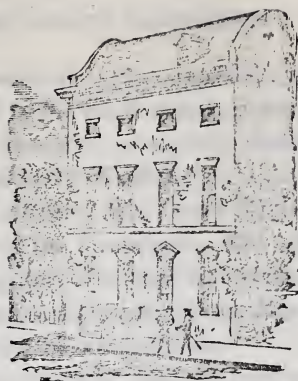
gressman. My husband snored. I hope the bed was buggy, for he deserved it. In the morning, after a sleepless night, I heard Alonzo cry:

“Miss Bibbapron! Congress water!”

Now I know where this dreadful Congress water gets its name. It's what makes Senators tipsy.

I hope the Impeachment trial will be done soon. Congressman Starch shall never get my vote. Oh! that I should be a bride and bring my husband to Washington!”





WASHINGTON'S WHITE HOUSE AS IT WAS IN PHILADELPHIA, 1790.

## CHAPTER XVI.

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### THE WHITE HOUSE AND ITS OCCUPANTS.

The President's residence down to 1800 was of a floating character; now in New York, now in Philadelphia; and the ladies of the Executive branch of the government were very like women in barracks with army officers; sometimes sent into damp dwellings, again like the wives of Methodist preachers, perpetually waiting for ships to come with their clothes and carpets.

Mrs. John Adams, in a volume of letters, edited by the late Minister to England, her grandson, which I have found in the Congressional Library, gives some lively sketches of a President's wife. Writing to her married daughter in the latter part of November, 1790, from Philadelphia, she speaks dolefully of her quarters and those of the ladies of the Cabinet.

"Poor Mrs. Knox, (wife of the first Secretary of War,) is in great tribulation about her furniture. The vessel sailed the day before the storm and had not been heard of on Friday last. I had a great misfortune happen to my best trunk of clothes. The vessel sprung a leak and my trunks got wet a foot high, by





which means I have several gowns spoiled; and the one you (Mrs. Smith) worked is the most damaged, and a black satin—the blessed effects of tumbling about the world.”

After a while the City of Washington was laid out, and in the first year of this century, Mrs. John Adams started for the great new “Palace” of the President. The whole story is told in a letter to her daughter, Mrs. Smith, written November 21st, 1800. It is notable as being probably the first letter ever written in the White House by its mistress:

“I arrived here Sunday last, and without meeting with any accident worth noticing, except losing ourselves when we left Baltimore, and going eight or nine miles on the Frederick road, by which means we were obliged to go the other eight through woods, where we wandered two hours without finding a guide or the path. Fortunately a straggling black came up with us, and we engaged him as a guide, to extricate us out of our difficulty; but woods are all you see from Baltimore until you reach *the city*, which is so only in name. Here and there is a small cot, without a glass window, interspersed among the forests, through which you travel miles without seeing any human being. \* \* \* \* \*

“The house is upon a grand and superb scale, requiring about thirty servants to attend and keep the apartments in proper order, and perform the ordinary business of the house and stables—an establishment very well proportioned to the President’s salary. The lighting of the apartments from the kitchen to parlor and chambers, is a tax indeed; and the fires we are obliged to keep to secure us from daily agues is another very cheering comfort. To assist us in this great castle, and render less attendance necessary, bells are wholly wanting, not one single one being hung through the whole house, and promises are all you can obtain. This is so great an inconvenience that I know not what to do or how to do. \* \* \*. If they will put up some bells and let me have wood enough to keep fires, I design to be pleased. Surrounded with forests, can you believe that wood is not to be had, because people cannot be



found to cut and cart it? \* \* \* Briesler has had recourse to coal; but we cannot get grates made and set. We have indeed come into a new country. You must keep all this to yourself, and when asked how I like it, say that I write you the situation is beautiful, which is true.

"The house is made habitable, but there is not a single apartment finished, and all within-side, except the plastering, has been done since Briesler (the steward) came. We have not the least fence, yard or other convenience without, and the great unfinished audience-room I make a drying-room of, to hang up the clothes in. The principal stairs are not up, and will not be this Winter. Six chambers are made comfortable; two are occupied by the President and Mr. Shaw; two lower rooms, one for a common parlor, and one for a levee room. Up stairs there is the oval room, which is designed for the drawing-room, and has the crimson furniture in it. It is a very handsome room now, but when completed, it will be beautiful. If the twelve years in which this place has been considered as the future seat of Government, had been improved, as they would have been in New England, very many of the present inconveniences would have been removed."

Mrs. Adams, writing again November 27th, says that: "Two articles we are most distressed for; the one is bells, but the more important is wood. Yet you cannot see wood for trees. We have only one cord and a half of wood in this house where twelve fires are constantly required. It is at a price, indeed; from four dollars it has risen to nine!"

Again, Mrs. Adams shows us a picture of distress almost as bad as a Methodist preacher's wife's experiences:

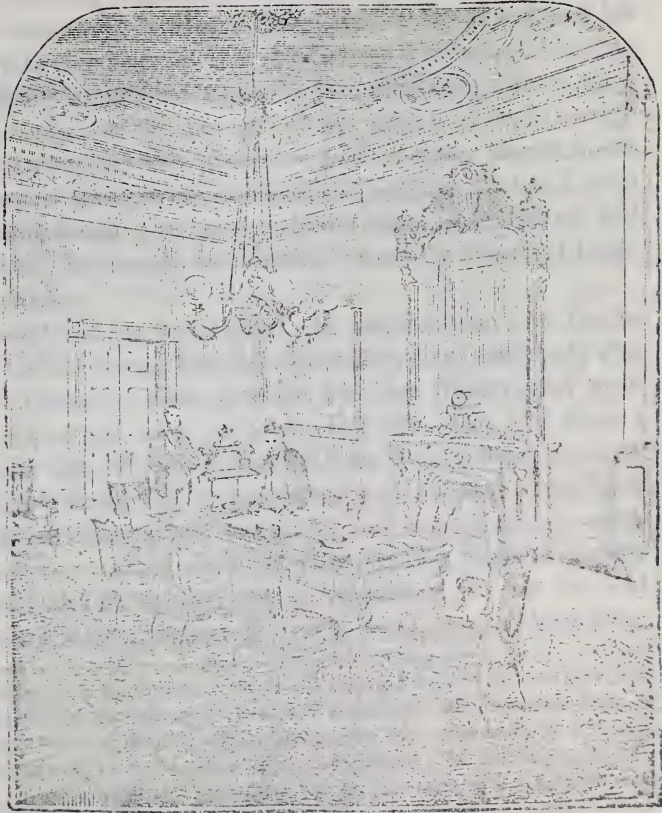
"The vessel which has my clothes and other matters is not arrived. The ladies are impatient for a drawing-room. I have no looking-glasses but "dwarfs" for this house; nor a twentieth-part lamps enough to light it. Many things were stolen; more broken by removal; among the number my tea china is more than half missing. Georgetown affords nothing."

Mrs. Adams was a preacher's daughter, married young, and





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THE CABINET CHAMBER IN THE WHITE HOUSE, OR PRESIDENTIAL MANSION, AT WASHINGTON.





she burst into tears when her husband got his first nomination to anything. They lived together fifty-three years. John was the son of a religious shoemaker, and himself a school-teacher. His conceit was large, his thrift equal to it, and all the Adamses since his day have not degenerated from these standards. They were the original Yankees of the White House, and it is remarkable that every Northern President has saved some of his salary, while the contrary is true of every Southerner but one. They kept the unfinished mansion in a righteous sort of way, drank a good deal of tea, shopped cheap, went to church through mud and snow, and the plasterers told so many stories about what they saw through the cracks that Congress elected Adams out, and demanded a man who should be a little wicked and swear some. Lemonade and oat-cakes were the standard lunch in those times.

Jefferson liked his social glass; he used darkeys to do the chores; he had to pay his own secretary, like everybody else down to Jackson's time, provide his own library, and meet deficits out of his own pocket.\* His wife, who had been a widow, like Mrs. Washington, died long before his accession, and he had a house full of daughters and adopted daughters. It was French republican simplicity and camp-meeting courting. Jefferson talked with everybody freely, disliked clergymen, never had an opinion but he ventilated it; but he held more than his own, because he was a great man, without affec-

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\*It is common saying in these days, that it costs a President for the first time more than \$25,000 per annum to live in Washington. Mr. Jefferson wrote in 1807: "I find on a review of my affairs here as they will stand on the 3d of March, that I shall be three or four months' salary behindhand. In ordinary cases, this degree of arrearage would not be serious, but on the scale of the establishment here, it amounts to seven or eight thousand dollars, which having to come out of my private funds, will be felt by me sensibly." He then directs his commission merchant to obtain a loan from a Virginia bank, and adds: "I have been under an agony of mortification \* \* \* Nothing could be more distressing to me than to leave debts here unpaid, if indeed, I should be permitted to depart with them unpaid, of which I am by no means certain." He may have apprehended from tradesmen's rapacity, aided by political hostility, imprisonment for debt.



tations. In those days, atheists, painters, editors, Bohemians, and carpet-baggers of all sorts, foreign and domestic, made free with the White House. The President, red-haired and spindle-shanked, read all the new poems, admired all that was antique and all that was new, but nothing between times. The White House was hung with no red tape. It stood all this loose invasion because there was a real, sincere man in it.

In Mrs. James Madison, the present White House found its brilliant mistress, albeit she had been brought up a Quaker, Mistress Dolly Payne, then Mrs. Todd, widow, and at last the wife of Congressman Madison, who had been jilted early in life by Miss Floyd, her townswoman. Madison was well along in years when he married, and Mrs. Madison had to take care of him. He had no children. The place was clear there for outside company, and it is questionable as to whether the house has at any time since been so well administered. Madison was a diminished and watered copy of Washington, and made a good parlor ornament. There was nothing little about him, except a general want of character, compensated for by a good deal of respectability. Mrs. Madison made the big house ring with good cheer; dancing was lively, as in Jefferson's time; the lady was "boss," and, unlike most of her imitators, had the genius for it. The whole cost of the President's house, now perfectly completed, had been \$333,207.

After the British burned it, the total cost of rebuilding, and adding two porticoes, \$301,496.25. The burning happened so unexpectedly, that one of Mrs. Madison's great dinners was eaten by the British, all smoking as they found it. The lady herself cut out of its frame a cherished portrait of Washington, still preserved in the mansion, and when the President returned, they opened house on the corner of Twentieth street and the avenue, near the "circle," on the way to Georgetown. After Madison died, his widow rented a house opposite the White House, and kept up the only secondary, or ex-Presidential Court, ever held in Washington.

Mr. Monroe's wife was a fairly wealthy lady of New York,





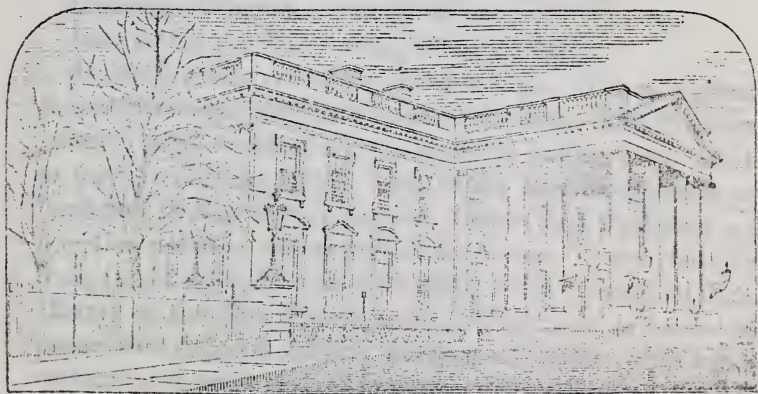


THE BLUE ROOM AT THE WHITE HOUSE, OR PRESIDENTIAL  
MANSION, AT WASHINGTON.



and he came to the Presidency at an era when all parties harmonized. The White House was quite a court in his day, as he had an interesting family, gave great dinners, and looked benevolently through his blue eyes, at all the receptions. He had no brilliant qualities, and therefore had no "nonsense about him." By this time the White House had been all restored and furnished, although the grounds were still a good deal like a brick yard. Let us look at the furniture of it in those days, little changed down to the period of Harriet Lane and Mrs. Lincoln.

James Hoban built both the original and the reconstructed White House. It stands on ground forty-four feet above high water, but the drainage all around it is bad, so that fever and ague may be caught there if you only prepare your mind to get them. A small chest of homœopathic medicines in the house is a sure preventative, whether you take them or not. The building is



THE WHITE HOUSE.

one hundred and seventy feet long and eighty-six deep, built of free-stone over all. There is an Ionic portico in front and rear, opening upon grounds of shade and lawn which are open to the public at all times. The front portico is double, so as to admit folks on foot and carriages also. About one-half of the upper part of this house belongs to the family elected to live in it, and also some of the basement; but the whole of the





first or main floor is really public property, and half the second floor is the President's business office. Therefore, ladies, you will own as much of the White House when you come to live in it, as you own of the hotel in which you board.

The great mansion has a wide hall in it, a stairway on one side, leading up to the office-rooms, and at the bottom, or, to be less Cockney, the end of the hall, there is a large oval room, opening out of which are two parlors, left and right; go through the room to the right and you enter the great dining-room; go through the room to the left and you enter the large banqueting-room. Now see the size of these rooms, which you will perceive at once to be home-like as a connected series of meeting-houses:

Hall (entrance), 40 by 50 feet.

Oval room, 40 by 30 feet.

Square parlors (left and right), 30 by 22 feet.

Company dining-room, 40 by 30 feet.

Banqueting (or East) room, 80 by 40 feet.

All these rooms are twenty-two feet high. You will perceive that they are eminently cosy and contracted. The President's private rooms consist of a great barn-like waiting-room, and two or three connecting offices. Let us see how these rooms were furnished in the time of Monroe, Adams, and Jackson; a description which is nearly perfect for to-day. I get these facts from an old book, defunct since 1830, called "Jonathan Elliot's History of the Ten Mile Square." Oval-room, crimson flock paper, with deep gilt border; crimson silk chairs, ditto window curtains; one great piece of pattern carpet interwoven with arms of the United States; tables and chimney-pieces of marble; two huge mirrors and a cut-glass chandelier. Into this oval room the square rooms to left and right open on levee nights, with furniture as follows, distributed also amongst the dining-rooms: Paper of green, yellow, white and blue, respectively sprinkled with gilt stars and bordered with gold; between the two dining-rooms, company and private, the china (not your own, ladies), is stored, and the provender (enough in all con-



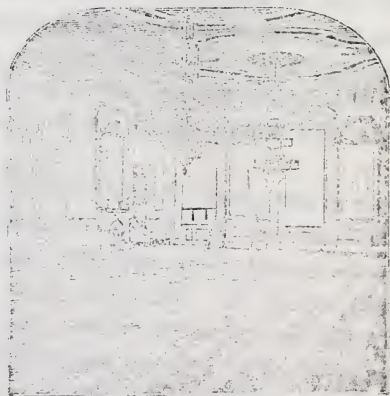




THE EAST ROOM IN THE WHITE HOUSE, OR PRESIDENTIAL  
MANSION. AT WASHINGTON.



science to pay for) is kept on ice, subject only to the trifling pilferings of the aristocratic steward, who commonly keeps two or three small groceries in the suburbs running. These rooms are plentiful with panelings, mirrors, chandeliers, and a painting or two of not much consequence comes in. There was no gas in these rooms till the time of Polk, and everybody was greasy with candles. It looked like a perpetual secular mass. got up for the masses. The enormous East room had lemon-colored paper with cloth border; four mantels of black marble with Italian black and gold fronts; great grates, all polished; a mirror over each mantel, eight and a half feet high by five feet wide, ponderously framed; five hundred yards of Brussels carpet, colored fawn, blue and yellow with deep red borders; three great cut-glass chandeliers and numerous gilt brackets; curtains of light blue moreen with yellow draperies, a gilded eagle holding up the drapery of each; a cornice of gilded stars all around the room; sofas and chairs of blue damask satin;



INTERIOR EAST ROOM.

under every chandelier a rich round table of black and gold slabs, and in all the piers a table corresponding, with splendid lamps above each; rare French China vases, etc.

Here, you have the White House pretty much as it stands, barring the leaky roof that nobody can mend; a huge hotel, full of the ghosts of dead men and the echoes of political gabble; ringing of nights with the oaths of Jackson, the fiddle of Jefferson, the cooing of John Tyler, the dirges over the corpses of Harrison, Taylor, and Lincoln. If you come to live in it, you know nothing of who else is visitor. Marry a man who keeps a hotel, and you have about all that a President's lady possesses.



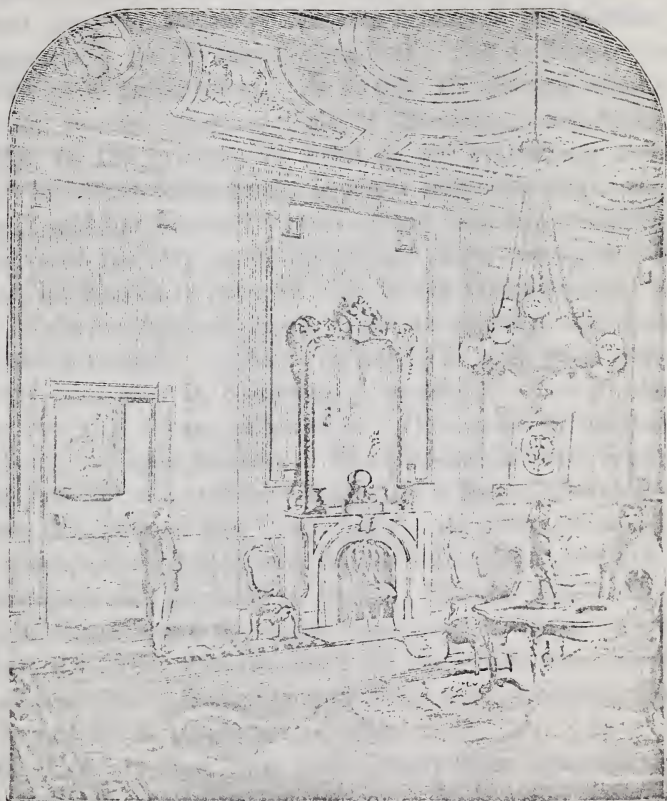


John Quincy Adams was arraigned in the campaign of 1828 for having put up a billiard table in the White House. This had been bought by his son and secretary, Charles Francis Adams, out of the latter's private allowance. It was the first billiard table ever set up in the White House. During his administration, the East room, in which his mother had hung clothes to dry, was so gorgeously furnished, that the Jackson people abused him for it on the stump, and in the party newspapers. He was the most perfect host, except Millard Fillmore, and possibly Frank Pierce, that the North ever gave to the White House. Modest, bold, widely experienced, he was the last learned man that has lived in the Executive Mansion, and more learned than any other occupant of it. He was too genteel to be re-elected. He went down to duty as cheerfully as to an apotheosis, and graduated out of the White House into Congress.

"The White House," says James Parton, "has more in common with the marquee of a Commander-in-Chief than the home of a civilized family. Take it, therefore, as it looked under Old Hickory, the archetype of Mr. Johnson. To keep up the Presidential hospitality, he had to draw upon the proceeds of his farm. Before leaving Washington, in 1837, he had to send for six thousand dollars of the proceeds of his cotton crop in order to pay the debts caused by the deficit of the last year's salary. A year previous to that time he had to offer for sale a valuable piece of land in Tennessee, to get three thousand dollars, for which he was in real distress. "Here in Washington," he says, "I have no control of my expenses, and can calculate nothing on my salary."

Earl was the painter Carpenter of Andrew Jackson, and painted his portrait in the White House. Earl used to get orders because he had the ear of Jackson. Everybody in Christendom poured into the White House in those days. Mrs. Eaton was the Mrs. Cobb of the time, and Jackson's most persistent public effort was to make people visit her. He used Martin Van Buren for the tolerably little business of forcing





THE GREEN ROOM IN THE WHITE HOUSE, OR PRESIDENTIAL  
MANSSION, AT WASHINGTON.





this lady into society, and finally dismissed all his cabinet and sent his daughter and son home to Tennessee, because they refused to embrace this lady. At the levees everybody ate cheese; when there was no cheese they ate apples, cold smoked sausage, anything provided it had a smell. The place stank with old pipe and smoke; it was redolent with Bourbon whiskey. For the first time the Executive Mansion became a police-office, a caucus-room, a guard-room, a mess-tent. But Jackson's vices were all of a popular sort. He called all his supporters by their first names. General Dale, of Mississippi, met Jackson strolling in the grounds in front of the President's house. (What President walks in the grounds familiarly any more?) "Sam," said the General, "come up and take some whiskey." He shivered his clay pipes, uttering emphatic sentences. He invited his friends to roam at will in the White House. He used to smoke corn-cob pipes, which he whittled and bored with his own hands. He had a collection of pipes greater than has ever been seen in this country outside of a tobacco-shop. There was wine always on his table. He cracked hickory-nuts on a hand-iron upon his knee. The cold-blooded and impenetrable Van Buren he called "Matty," as if Mr. Johnson should address Mr. Seward as "Little Bill." He drove all sorts of odd coaches, had street fights, behaved like the incomprehensibly despotic old patriot that he was; but the people always stood by him, because the people were about as bad as he was. He kept the city in dreadful fear; all his friends were duelists and office-grabbers, desperate with thirst and low origin. Jackson turned 2,000 people out of office in the first year of his reign. Prior to that time only seventy-three removals had been made in nearly half a century. Said one of Jackson's most intimate friends:

"Our republic, henceforth, will be governed by factions, and the struggle will be, who shall get the offices and their emoluments—a struggle embittered by the most base and sordid passions of the human heart."

After the First Andrew had retired from the Presidency, he wrote to a Nashville newspaper in 1840, of Henry Clay:





"How contemptible does this demagogue appear when he descends from his high place in the Senate, and roams over the country retailing slanders against the living and the dead."

Jackson also encouraged Sam Houston to waylay and brutally beat Congressman William Stanberry, of Ohio, for words spoken in debate, saying: "After a few more examples of the same kind, members of Congress will learn to keep civil tongues in their heads." He also pardoned Houston when the latter had been fined by a District of Columbia court for the same act.

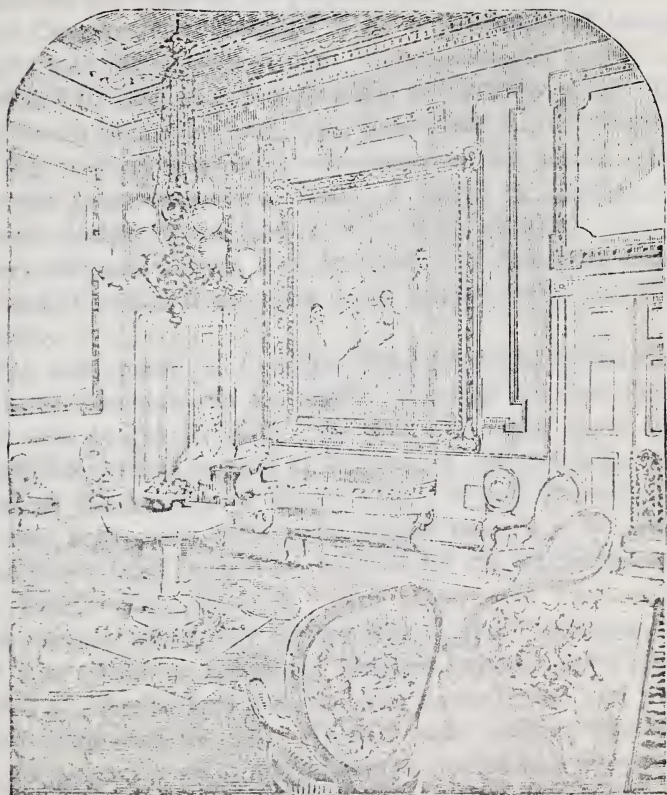
When the First Andrew left the White House with a farewell address, the New York *American* said: "Happily it is the last humbug which the mischievous popularity of this illiterate, violent, vain and iron-willed soldier can impose upon a confiding and credulous people." Jackson returned home to Tennessee with just ninety dollars in money, having expended all his salary and all the proceeds of his cotton crop. He was then an even seventy years of age, racked with pains, rheums, and passions, a poor life to pilot by.

Jackson kept two forks beside the plate of every guest, one of steel, another of silver, as he always ate, himself, with a steel fork. I have found in a sketch-book this picture of the White House as he was seen in it at his best:

"A large parlor, scantily furnished, lighted from above by a chandelier; a bright fire in the grate; around the fire four or five ladies sewing, say Mrs. Donelson, Mrs. Andrew Jackson (adopted son's wife), Mrs. Edward Livingstone, &c. Five or six children, from two to seven years of age, playing about the room, regardless of documents and work-baskets. At a distant end of the apartment, General Jackson, seated in an arm chair, wearing a long, loose coat, smoking a long reed pipe, with a red Virginia clay bowl (price four cents). A little behind the President, Edward Livingstone, Secretary of State, reading a despatch from the French minister, and the President waves his pipe absently at the children to make them play less noisily."

Martin Van Buren, the first of the New York politicians,





THE RED ROOM IN THE WHITE HOUSE, OR PRESIDENTIAL  
MANSION, AT WASHINGTON.





and the political heir of Aaron Burr, was boosted into the White House by Jackson, to whom he played parasite for eight years, and who rode with him to inauguration. Van Buren's wife died in 1818; he had four sons; kept the White House clean and decent, but never was heartily beloved. The East Room was one cause of his political death, as Ogle, a Pennsylvania Congressman, described it as a warehouse of luxuries bought with the people's money. Ogle mentioned every ornament and its cost, and the ladies kept all the items going. Had Van Buren been a married man, they would have "skinned" his lady in every dreadful drawing-room in the Union. Happily the poor woman was dead. I forgot to mention, that General Jackson's wife died of joy over his election. She was a very religious woman, very ignorant, and Jackson's friends thought it well that she was never tempted with the White House.

The short month of President Harrison in the White House is chiefly memorable by his death. His was the first funeral ever held in the building. He was sixty-eight years old, a magnified physical portrait of William H. Seward, with something of the bearing of Henry Clay. A full Major-General he had been, and, beloved by almost every one, his graces were nearly meek, except as relieved by the remembrance of his valor. The power of "hard cider," and "log cabin," nick names, while they elected him to the Presidency, also put him under a campaign pressure, which, added to the crowd of office-seekers who ran him down by day and night, quite terminated his life. He took cold seeking the outer air for privacy's sake, and diarrhœa carried him away. His last words were: "I wish the true principles of the government carried out. I ask for nothing more!"

John Tyler was the first President who brought a bride into the White House, as he was the first who buried a wife from its portal. The dead wife he had married in 1813, the new one in 1844. He took the oath of office, owing to Harrison's dying during the recess of Congress, to



a District of Columbia Judge. The White House was therefore in a tolerably dull condition all this time, and it improved very little under General Taylor. Two dead Presidents, one dead wife, and a widower's wedding are dismal stock enough for one house in five years. Tyler approaches Johnson in some disagreeable respects. He went back on his party, and never recovered good esteem even among traitors to the country.

President Polk suggests something of Johnson in the place of birth, North Carolina, and in his place of adoption, Tennessee. He was just fifty years old when he took possession of the White House. Mrs. Polk was a daughter of Joel Childress, a merchant of Tennessee, and a Presbyterian, while the President inclined toward the Methodists. She made a good hostess and leaves a good name in the old mansion.

As President Harrison was killed by office-seekers, President Taylor was killed by a Fourth of July,—standing out in the hot sun, after fourteen months' tenure of office. Taylor made more mistakes of etiquette than any other President, not excepting Mr. Johnson, but he had a heart. His war horse followed his rider's body out of the White House gate. In those days Jeff Davis, son-in-law of the President, came familiarly to the White House. Taylor was a good father and a jagged old host. But he always meant well.

Millard Fillmore, his successor, was by odds the handsomest man that ever lived in the building, and also the most elegant. He was the American Louis Philippe. His wife died a few days after the expiration of his term, and also his daughter. Frank Pierce was a winning man, but without any large magnetic graces. He rode horseback every day, unattended, miles into the country; his wife was a perpetual invalid.

We have now come close to the great clash of the rebellion. James Buchanan, the ancient news-carrier between Clay and Jackson, mounting upon the spiral stairs of office-holding, brought for his house-keeper, Hattie Lane, a red-haired, rosy-checked, buxom Lancaster county lass, not unused to fair







VIEW IN THE CONSERVATORY AT THE WHITE HOUSE, OR  
PRESIDENTIAL MANSION, AT WASHINGTON.





society, and the only drawback to her perfect happiness in the White House was the old uncle himself. He bullied small politicians who had served him at his own table before his niece, but in the sense of outward courtliness, when it suited him, there were few such masters of deportment as old Buck himself. He fell, like all Northern dough-faces, into the hands of rebel thieves like Floyd, and did their bidding till the powder was hot for the match.

Then came Abraham Lincoln with his ambitious wife.

Afterward with Mr. Johnson came his invalid lady, and his daughters, Mrs. Patterson and the widow Stover.



## CHAPTER XVII.

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A SERIES OF OPEN-AIR EXCURSIONS AROUND WASHINGTON TO GET RID OF POLITICS—BULL RUN FIELD—THE OLD FORTS—THE PAUPER'S REST.

On the ninth anniversary of the battle of the first Bull Run, I wrote these opening lines at the Robinson House, where the hottest battle was concentrated. That day, Sunday, two weeks, would have been the exact anniversary of the battle. How time flies! It is a beautiful day, not quite so warm as the day of the battle, and we are all looking at maps and eating soft-boiled eggs under Robinson's shed, with old Mrs. Robinson looking down on us benevolently.

"Mrs. Robinson," says one of the ladies, "were you frightened when you saw they were going to fight a battle round your house?"

"Dear, dear, honey," says Mrs. Robinson, "I was so frightened that I can't tell you anything about it. 'Peared like I had done so many sins, they sent all their armies after me a purpose, that blessed Sabbath day. I jest got in the cellar and prayed, and the ole man he got under a bridge, and I 'spect he prayed too. Thank the Lord for these bright, still Sundays now-a-days!"

The old road to Bull Run. We paid twenty-five dollars for a fine, solid, showy team and two horses, and left Washington with four persons—one of us acting as driver—on Saturday afternoon at four o'clock. Country roads of a fair sort led us by Ball's Cross Roads, Upton Hill, Falls Church, and across the shallow branches of the Accotink to Fairfax Court House—





fully eighteen miles—where we put up for the night at the clean and not expensive tavern of Major Tyler, a cousin of the deceased President John Tyler, and formerly Commandant of Marines at Washington Barracks.

Tyler is a thick-set, peculiar man, with big ears and small eyes and mouth, and a disposition to be amiable and lordly together. Altogether a man capable of furnishing good waffles, Maryland biscuit, and delicious slappers, with spring chickens and fresh eggs, and he keeps a cellar full of clear ice. The rest we produce from the carriage box, and, after supper, sitting on the upper veranda, we look down at the two little country stores, at the “chivs” talking about Governor Walker and Underwood, at the hard gravelly turn-pike up which Tompkins made that absurdly interesting raid, and at the brick court-house across the way, with freshly-cemented loop holes in the sides and gable, where George Washington’s will is kept. The air is cool as early spring, and the moonlight makes a wondrous effect in this Virginia country, shining up the white streamers of the woods, tinging the woods, making rivers and bays of the clouds, so that every star breaking through seems to be the lamp set in a ship that rides there.

“This is five hundred feet higher than Washington,” says Major Tyler, it’s the dividing ridge between the Accotink and the Occoquan. They set the court-house here wisely.”

“What brought you here, Major?”

“I had to do something, sir. I was a dishonored man if I did not give my services to my State. I put all my money—\$36,000—in Confederate securities, and left a place where I had been all my years of manhood. My property in Washington is confiscated, and John Defrees, who bought it, makes me pay its taxes, and has, besides, insured my life, to protect himself in the property.”

Centreville is one of the most ruined of all hamlets. There were originally about thirty houses in it, a majority of which are now mere chimneys, standing erect among weeds, and



several of the houses which remain have been patched up with logs and planks, so that what stands is, if possible, more forbidding than what is destroyed. At present the only signs of life about Centreville seem to be one store, one shop, one new church, and one Methodist Sunday-school. There is no tavern in the place, and there seem to be no wells of water in the vicinity, and all the water is pulled from the branch, a half-dry arm of Bull Run. The site of Centreville is one of the noblest in Virginia, standing upon the tall spine of a long, crescent-shaped ridge, which bristles with dry forts along its whole profile, and makes against the sky a battlemented horizon, which might almost give suggestions to an architect. Seven different roads meet at Centreville, and in revived times it ought to be a busy place.

One naturally expects, as he approaches a celebrated field soon after the event which commemorates it, that he will observe many vestiges of the action. There are but two battle fields I have seen which bear out this character—Waterloo, where the loop-holed brick walls of the orchard remain as they were on the day of the fight, as well as the blackened ruins of the Chateau of Hougoumont. The other battle-field is Bull Run, which is full of ruin, and the signs of ruin begin from the time you quit Fairfax Court-house, following the path of the Northern Army. In the first place, there is Fairfax itself, partly pulled down; the Court-house, which was loop-holed during three-fourths of the war, still showing the fresh bricks in it; the Jail, also loop-holed, and just on the outskirts of Fairfax a few bricks are lying upon each other to tell where existed the hamlet of Germantown.

About a mile past Fairfax, the good turnpike runs off to Chantilly, the scene of Pope's final defeat, where Stevens and Kearney gave up their lives. Leaving this turnpike, our carriage descended into what is, above all other highways known to man, a road to ruin—the road to Centreville. A forbidding and lonesome look marks this wide road from a far distance. Like all the old turnpikes of Virginia, it had been





built in a staunch manner, with a hard, high limestone pavement in the middle of it: some of the stones white, and some red, but all large, hard, and set up endways; and, formerly, this rampart of rock was covered with clay, sand, and gravel, so that it made the broad area of the road level and like a parade. Now the material part of the road in the centre has been washed free of all the gravel and the clay, so that it looks like the naked skeleton of a blasted highway, the bones of a road once merry with life, and tinkling with teams. The only way to travel it at all was to take the side-paths, or what are called here the Summer roads, which sometimes run pleasantly for little skips, and then suddenly come to little promontories of trap rock and outcropping limestone, at which we could see the ladies looking alarmed from a distance, and nervously holding tight their seats. This lonely, this desolate, this battle-accursed road runs from Fairfax almost due west for thirteen miles, passing through Centreville, and a short distance from Stone Bridge it is barred across its whole length by rails, for Stone Bridge is still a ruin after five years of peace, and all wagons have to take to the fields, making a long detour, and fording Bull Run at a point where the long, aged, gnarled roots of the oaks, elms, and hemlocks form a Dantesque bank against the ford, while the other is a dark, succulent and snaky copse, with swamps, grape vines, and wild mixtures of dogwood, willow, and Virginia creepers. Through this defile, worthy of the pencil of Salvator Rosa, our city-made carriage moved like a London snob hunting in a Bungalow jungle, and directly we plunged to the hubs into Bull Run, a pretty stream of a reddish gray color, inclined to be muddy, with swampy banks, and crops of corn growing closely up to the margin. Below and above, the stream made an aisle of black light under the arch of the trees, and in the current grew bunches of duck-weeds, blue-stalked flags, and other aquatic leaves, the appearance of which indicated snakes beneath them. We made another long detour on the other side, and came to a pair of bars, which again admitted us to





the turnpike, and here we made inquiries at the Van Pelt House, and then retreated, over the track taken by Tyler's division, to the celebrated stone bridge. The turnpike was grown up into long green grass, and before we got to the bridge we saw a snake wriggle off before the horses' hoofs. Close by the bridge we took the horses out of their harness, descended beneath the abutments of the bridge, spread shawls for the ladies, and proceeded ourselves to cross the stream by certain stones and fish-boxes which span it. We had no sooner put our feet on the first stones than three black water-snakes dropped noiselessly into the water, and swam away. A black boy coming by told us that the stone bridge had become a spot where you are always sure to see snakes, and that sometimes they lie up on the tall red abutments, and throw themselves with a lifeless splash into the water.

I sat by the single arch of red limestone—broken, grass-covered, the parapets of the approaches overgrown—and heard the dark water sing and curdle along under the natural ledges of rock, and saw the turnpike, barred by worm-fences and deep with grass, where once, in times of peace, the young men rode courting, the buggies rolled to church, the runaway negroes slipped Northward by night, the cattle and sheep limped in dusty groves to slaughter, and finally, where great guns rumbled, and the troops stacked arms to rest, and thought of death close by. All these images were faint by the light of this highway of desolation, and these appealing abutments stretching toward each other, and seeking to span the river. What a little stream to be known round the world—fordable every few rods, not above sixty feet wide—yet, withal, a stream of dignity and austerity! The timber that grew along the half morasses here and there upon its borders, was high and branching; the morasses themselves were full of rank grass, and the movement of the water was sullen and dull, as if it loved to tarry in the dark pools and drew back from the light. To left and right the woods closed in upon the visitor, and over these tree tops careened the tall hills,



with but one house in sight, and a vague suggestion besides of Robinson's shanty in some huddling fruit trees, which carried a human intimation. Looking back toward Centreville from the bridge, a group of negro quarters and a small house stood on one side in an out-field, and a new negro hut, solitary in a cornfield, on the other, both backed by wood. Down this road the half-willing troops of Tyler had moved at daylight, blocking up the way, delaying Hunter's men, and these last had finally reappeared across the bridge, their advance measured by the clouds of dust, which were denser and higher than the cannons' smoke.

We followed up this turnpike to where the Ludley Ford road crossed it at right angles, down which, marching Southward, the flanking division of Hunter came, and by the white cabin of Matthews it unfolded from column to line, stretching three-quarters of a mile, and staking a fringe of skirmishers to the front. All the forenoon the contest was to carry the turnpike, and release the divisions behind the stone bridge. By beating Evans and Bee this much was accomplished, and then the battle was transferred to the other end of the turnpike, where one long, oval hill, the promontory of a high plateau, stretched from the turnpike to the Ludley road, and on this exalted cape the first armies of civil war fought. What was the real battle of Bull Run was on a space of ground not above two hundred acres in area. The shape of this hill is defined by two rivulets tributary to Bull Run: that in front called Young's Branch, which twice crosses the turnpike, once at the cross roads, and again nearer Bull Run, crossed in the latter case by a small wooden bridge. The back side of the hill is covered with small wild timber, oak and pine, which leave the summit and the slopes toward the roads nearly bare. Upon the bare parts the fiercest battle raged for three hours around two small common farm houses—Robinson's, nearest Bull Run, and Henry's, near by the Ludley road. The Federal troops were strongest along the latter half-sunken country road, and they formed a line of battle like a carpenter's





square, while the rebels made a line like a crescent in the edge of the low woods, which half covered their battalions. The length of the line of battle was about half a mile, or less, and the Confederate batteries were massed on their right, and the Federal batteries on their own right, respectively. Upon this small oval summit a fight as desperate as any of the war took place, fiercest around the shanty called the Henry House, confined almost entirely to musketry and artillery, and the hottest contests for the batteries, whose horses had been quickly killed.

At present, this hill is marked with a few gulleys, where the rains have washed, and by many excavated pits where the dead have been disinterred. The country for many miles hereabout is plainly revealed, the monument at Groveton, on the second battle-field of Bull Run, showing distinctly, and Manassas Junction, a fine white village, five miles away, is seen through a fissure in the timber.

I ascertained these facts about the persons who occupied the dwellings on the battle-field of the first Bull Run; the first house on the Warrenton turnpike, to the right hand, after passing the stone bridge, is occupied by Mr. Donahue, who lives in the house of the widow Van Pelt.

This house is a pleasant frame dwelling, surrounded by tall and unbrageous trees, and it was the only house in sight from the stone bridge, on the day of the battle. All the buildings stand, though the barn was shelled through and through, but on this particular farm no fighting was done, yet across it hundreds of troops retreated, to re-cross Bull Run.

The second house to the right is that of Gus. Van Pelt, in which Bob Paine now lives; this house shows marks of the fight, and the farm was well fought over on the morning of the action.

The third house on the right of the turnpike is a very peculiar one, and no man who figured in that action can well forget it. It is a large, oblong, red lime-stone house, built of large blocks, and it stands nearly at the junction of the Ludley road. It is owned by Mr. Starbuck, who was a sutler in the Federal



army, and, who, true to his army instincts, keeps a house of entertainment there now. This house was well-riddled in the battle with shell and ball, and was set on fire sometime during the day, but the neighbors, in a very neighborly manner, overcame their fear so far as to rush in and put the fire out. All accounts, even the most moderate, agree that the Northern troops put the highest construction on the crime of treason, on the day of the battle of Bull Run, and set fire to whatever would burn.

Turning to the left of the turnpike, the first place beyond the stone bridge is the celebrated Jim Robinson's farm, which was one of the centres of the elliptical battle of the afternoon—the other centre being a farm of the widow Henry, just to the right of it, a quarter of a mile.

Our party made an impromptu dinner in the cool lawn before Jim Robinson's house ; for Jim is a venerable free negro who owns his own farm and the house, and his regular business is keeping drove cattle, and fattening them, on their road to Washington, but since the battle of Bull Run, he also furnishes fresh eggs, salt pork, fresh milk, and occasionally a spring chicken, for any visitors willing to pay for such luxuries. We gave Robinson about eighteen and three quarters cents a head for a very excellent lunch, and had our horses fed for a quarter a head. He had just built an aristocratic extension to his log cabin, consisting of a two-story plank structure, still in the hands of the carpenter. The old house is marked in fifty places with Minie balls, and Robinson's sons have collected a large coffee-pot full of canister, bullets, and conical balls, and they have half a barrel of grape, and bits of shell and rifle projectiles, plowed up in the fields. Robinson is a conservative Republican, and his eldest son who was a servant to General Beauregard during the war, said to me :

“ Most all the colored people are Republicans, although a few, who know no better, have been coaxed over to the Democracy. We are not violent party men, sir—father and his sons—but we think that for the present, our interest lies that way. They





have a Union League down at Manassas, but I reckon it is a sort of playing out."

The Robinsons, in fact, are rather opinionated and exclusive colored folks, having been born free, and the old man has a wonderful way of parading large and philosophic terms, his ignorance of which is so well covered by a benignant and plausible manner, that one listens with a mixture of humor and awe. During the battle, old Robinson hid under a bridge beneath the turnpike road, where he says there were about fifty of his neighbors, white and black, making a mottled and shivering democracy. His son went over to the Lewis house, then known by the name of "Portico"—every Virginian capable of living between two chimneys, dignifying his estate with a memorial title. The Lewis house was the headquarters of both Beauregard and of Johnston; it stood on a round hill about a mile back of the Robinson and Henry houses, and was surrounded with ancient shade trees, and with orchards. From this point the operations of the battle were mainly conducted. Lewis acted as a sort of guide to the Confederate army, during much of the war, for he had a thorough knowledge of the streams, nooks, bridges, and cattle-paths in all this region. His house stood until the day of the second battle of Bull Run, when some Federal camp-followers set it on fire, and burnt it to the ground. We saw Lewis and his family returning from church as we entered Robinson's place, and, mounted on a frisky young sorrel colt, he politely opened and shut the gate for us. His daughters and sons all rode horses, and it was interesting to see that two girls rode one horse, the girl behind having no saddle. Lewis is a sandy-haired, sandy-bearded man of middle age, and of quick, nervous temperament.

Ed. Carter, (pronounced all through Virginia as Kyarter), lives on a part of the battle field, and like everybody else in that region, is scarcely able to make a living.

I walked from Robinson's to the widow Henry's, over a part of the field where the most terrific fighting happened, passing the spot where the two rebel Generals, Bee and Barton,





were struck dead. A block of marble was set up to Bee's memory, after the first battle of Bull Run, but when Joe Johnston deserted Manassas, in the spring of 1862, Northern soldiers cracked the stone to pieces, and carried off the chips for relics. Bee was an able officer, raised by the United States, and it was he who gave the name of "Stonewall" to Thomas Jonathan Jackson, as the latter came to his support in the action.

"There stands Jackson," he said, "like a stone wall."

As we approached the Henry house, we saw a woman, dressed in black, picking flowers in the fields. She was the daughter of the widow Henry, who suffered a cruel death in her own house. She was aged and an invalid, and when the battle suddenly surged up to her house, her children sought safety in various places and left the old woman in bed. The full hurricane of the action burst right round this old shanty, and the unfortunate woman was cut all to pieces with shell, ball, and bullets, and the house itself was torn to flinders; they could scarcely recognize her body after the fury of the fight was over.

The Henry house is now replaced by a small frame building painted blue, with end chimneys outside, and in the yard of this dwelling stands in the open sun a small monument made of red limestone, from the banks of the Bull Run, two miles away; the monument is about sixteen feet high, and is capped with a large rifle projectile, while round the corners of the base four other cones of stone and exploded shell are raised, the whole edifice standing upon a mound of sod which has given way, so that it is probable the whole thing will tumble down in a few years. A white stone says in crudely carved letters, "Honor to the patriot dead!" But round the monument are neat little wooden signs on each of the four sides, which tell the story of the surroundings. One says that near that spot were captured parts of Griffin's, Rickett's, and other batteries. Another sign says that Stonewall Jackson was wounded hard-by, and that here he got his historic appellation. The fourth sign says that twenty-four Federal soldiers lie beneath. The monument is leaning, from defective foundations, and will soon tumble down.



The number of people lost in this battle attests, and by its equality as well, that it was a well maintained conflict. The rebel killed and wounded numbered 1,857, one-fifth of them slain. The Federal killed and wounded were 1,492, one-third slain. These official figures are probably too low on both sides. About one thousand persons gave up the ghost on this field. The Federal loss in all was ten cannons captured, besides seventeen others abandoned, and 4,000 muskets thrown away. Nearly one-third of the men afterward prominent in both armies, fought in the first battle of Bull Run, as subordinate officers.

Nine years after this battle has happened, we begin to feel that we walk upon the solid ground, in estimating its heroes and its importance.

In the first place, we have learned to estimate the character of McDowell, who planned this battle with a cool, wise head, and fought it out upon this plan according to the best advantage he could make of the material that lay at his command. No other battle during the whole war was better devised, and none in the East, fought on the offensive, during the next three years, had more nearly been successful. The Federal Commander was assailed for the folly of his troops here as few commanders have ever been, and yet he kept up heart, stood patiently by the cause, took a third-rate place under McClellan with generous resignation, and gave all the successive men placed over him hearty support, and since the death of George H. Thomas, it is safe to say there is no man in the United States upon whom we can rely for judgment, for devotion, for willingness to suffer above the common fate of all who suffered then, more than Irving McDowell.

Last winter, when the Army of the Potomac met at Philadelphia, and McDowell sat quietly amongst them, thinking himself an unsuccessful man, and one set down amongst the failures of the war, a quiet young officer arose with his glass in his hand, and proposed the health of General McDowell. As he did so, he made a stammering effort to say that since the war had passed by, and we had come to know man for man, and man





to man, we were equal to the appreciation of the Commander of the first Army of the Potomac. At once the whole table rattled with bravos and hearty cheers, and amidst more applause than had greeted the name of any man that night, McDowell rose, profoundly moved, the most patient and heroic martyr of the war, and he said as he always had said, that he knew the justice of his countrymen would come at last; that he had expected it long before, but that he had not complained, because he knew that it would come; and then his cold, regular army nature melting down to the occasion, he gave a little burst of egotism which was truer than tears, because it was both the occasion and himself.

We reached home after midnight on the second day, after a ride of fifty-six miles in sixteen hours. There were a good many old shoes and tin cups on the way, and a bridge of precarious fence-rails crosses Cub Run.

I climbed the high hills one day on the other side, and pushing up by-paths through bramble and laurel, gained the ramparts of old Fort Stanton.

How old already seem those fortresses, drawing their amphitheatre around the Capital city! Here the scarf had fallen off in places; the *abatiss* had been wrenched out for firewood; even the solid log platforms, where late the great guns stood on tip-toe, had yielded to the farmer's lever, and made, perhaps, joists for his barn, and piles for his bridge. The solid stone portals opening into bomb-proof and magazine, still remained strong and mortised, but down in the battery and dark subterranean quarters the smell was rank, the floor was full of mushrooms; a dog had littered in the innermost powder magazine, and showed her fangs as I held a lighted match before me advancing. Still the old names and numbers were painted upon the huge doorways beneath the inner parapet: "Officers quarters, 21." "Mess, 12," "Cartridge Box, 7." But around the slopes of the fort, among the bush and in the laurel clearing free negroes had built their cabins out of the wrecks of battery wagon and sentry-box, and down the paths that the cannoniers had



made in the moist hill sides, negro men and women, with pails and bundles on their heads, went jogging steadily, as in the first listless experience of self-ownership.

What a picturesque and stirring crime is war! Suggestively useless are the monuments it leaves, but touching the imagination far more than the lordliest architectures of peace. Now do we feel among these shriveled moats and salients that the Capital city of our country has some surroundings to make it an inspiration. These wrecks of its defences will be some day the picnic haunts of curious patriotism, when Washington has grown to be a great city. Greater than its founders ever wished!

I climbed upon the windiest corner of the rampart and looked down at the town. Its site is a noble one,—a bowlder bottom, it seemed to be, like the green meadows of those ancient salt estuaries in Holland, where the lambs play in the caverns of the fishes. Sloping up from the huddle of the city, the landscape stretched into far spines and capes of lofty woodland, and amidst them the dome of the Capitol crouched merely, as if driven into the ground. At my feet the navy yard lay, very silent, surrounded by its monitors and men-of-war; over the ravine of road behind me Booth galloped with his ghost on that Good Friday night; beyond the bridge he had crossed, the little, lonely cemetery of Congress lay on the river bank. I could make out the Treasury and the Capitol, like two towers of a great suspension bridge, and Washington city swung between them, like a great drove of speckled cattle crossing between the cables. It is impossible that this city shall not be a beautiful and respected one. But the curse of it and the country is the infamous system of rotation in office, whereby our Capital is peopled with periodical roves of hungry adventurers, who expect to steal a patrimony in four years.

About twenty thousand acres of wood land were felled around Washington to give play for the artillery of the forts. The fifty-six forts mounted from ten to fifty guns each; the batteries from three to twelve, making between eight and nine hundred guns in all. These were connected by rifle pits seven feet high,





and Alexandria's military road passed in from the rear of all these works through valley parts to conceal the movements of soldiers.\*

A stranger in Washington looking down the wide outer avenue, named "Massachusetts," which goes bowling from knoll to knoll and disappears in the unknown hills of the East, has no notion that it leads anywhere, and gives up the conundrum. On the contrary it points straight to the Washington Asylum, better known as the District Poor-house, an institution to become hereafter conspicuous to every tourist who shall prefer the Baltimore and Potomac, to the Baltimore and Ohio railroad; for the new line crosses the Eastern Branch by a pile-bridge nearly in the rear of the poor-house, and let us hope that when the whistle, like

"the pibroch's music thrills  
To the heart of those lone hills,"

the dreary banks and bluffs of the Eastern Branch will show more frequent signs of habitation and visitation.

To visit the Poor-House one must have a "permit" from the mayor, physician, or a poor commissioner. Provided with this, he will follow out Pennsylvania Avenue over Capitol Hill, until nearly at the brink of the Anacostia or Eastern Branch, when by the oblique Avenue called "Georgia" he will pass to his right the Congressional burying ground, and arriving at the powder magazine in front, draw up at the alms-house gate, a mile and a quarter from the palace of Congress.

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\* The line of earth forts built to defend Washington city in the Summer, Fall and early Winter of 1861 was reported on the seventh of December of that year by Chief Engineer Barnard to number forty-eight works, mounting over three hundred heavy guns: the actual defensive perimeter occupied was about thirty-five miles, exceeding the Torres Vedras by several miles, which were previously the most extensive. Of these forts several were outside the Columbia line in Maryland, all in Montgomery County, as follows: Fort Sumner, Fort Kirby, Fort Cross, Fort Davis: and Fort Mansfield, Fort Bayard and Fort Simmons. The three first named covered the Chain Bridge and the river side-ways, and were strengthened besides by Battery Bailey, Battery Benson and Battery Alexander, as well as by a block house looking down the Chain Bridge line. The field batteries of McClellan's army at, or soon after, this time assembled around Washington, consisted of 520 guns served by 12,500 men.





It is a smart brick building, four stories high, with green trimmings, standing on the last promontory of some grassy commons beloved of geese and billy-goats. The short, black cedars, which appear to be a species of vegetable crape, give a stubby look of grief to the region round the poorhouse, and thickest at the Congressional Cemetery, screen from the paupers the view of the city. Across the plains, once made populous by army hospitals, few objects move except funeral processions, creeping toward the graveyard or receding at a merry gait, and occasional pensioners, out on leave, coming home dutifully to their bed of charity. The report of some sportsman's gun, where he is rowing in the marshes of the gray river, sometimes raises echoes in the high hills and ravines of the other shore, where, many years ago, the rifles of Graves and Cilley were heard by every partisan in the land. Now the tall forts, raised in the war, are silent and deserted; the few villas and farmhouses look from their back-ground of pine upon the smart edifice on the city shore, and its circle of hospitals nearer the water, and its small-pox hospital a little removed, and upon the dead-house and the "Potter's Field," at the river brink. We all know the melancholy landscape of a poor-house.

The Potter's Field preceded the Poor-house on this side by many years. The almshouse was formerly erected on M street, between Sixth and Seventh, and, being removed here, it burned to the ground in the month of March, fourteen years ago, when the present brick structure was raised. The entire premises, of which the main part is the almshouse garden, occupy less than fifty acres, and the number of inmates is less than two hundred, the females preponderating in the proportion of three to one. Under the same roof are the Almshouse and the Work-house, the inmates of the former being styled "Informants," and of the latter "Penitents." The government of the Institution is vested in three commissioners, to whom is responsible the intendent, Mr. Joseph F. Hodgson, a very cheerful and practical-looking "Bumble."



Every Wednesday the three commissioners meet at this Almshouse and receive the weekly reports of the intendent, physician, and gardener. Once every year these officers and the matron, wagoner, and baker are elected. Sixteen ounces of bread and eight ounces of beef are the ration of the district pauper. The turnkey, gate-keeper, chief watchmen, and chief nurses are elected from the inmates. The gates are closed at sunset, and the lights go out at 8 p.m., all Winter. The inmates wear a uniform, labelled in large letters : Work-House or Washington Asylum.

The Poorhouse is an institution coeval with the Capital. We are told that while crabbed old Davy Burns, the owner of the most valuable part of the site of Washington city, was haggling with General Washington over his proportion of lots, his neglected and intemperate brother, Tommy, was an inmate of the Poorhouse.

Thus, while the Romulus of the place married his daughter to a Congressman, and was buried in a "mausoleum," on H street, Remus died without the walls and mingled his ashes, perhaps, with paupers.

The vaunted metropolis of the republican hopes of mankind, for such was Washington, the fabulous city, advertised and praised in every Capital of Western Europe, drew to its site artists, adventurers, and speculators from all lands. From Thomas Law, a secretary of Warren Hastings, who wasted the earnings of India on enterprises here, to a Frenchman who died on the guillotine for practicing with an infernal machine upon the life of Napoleon Bonaparte, the long train of pilgrims came, and saw, and despaired, and many of them, perhaps, lie in the Potter's Field. Old books and newspapers, chary on such personal questions, contain occasional references as to some sculptor's suicide, or to the straits of this or that French officer, or Claimant about Congress; and we know that Major L'Enfant, who conceived the plan of the place, sought refuge with a pitying friend and died here penniless.

The long war of twenty years in Europe brought to America





thousands in search of safety and rest, and to these the magnetism of the word "Capital" was often the song of the siren wiling them to the Poor-house. By the time Europe had wearied of the sword, the fatality attending high living, large slave-tilled estates, the love of official society, and the defective education of the young men of tide-water Virginia and Maryland, produced a new class of native-born errants and broken profligates, at Washington, and many a life whose memories began with a coach and four and a park of deer, ended them between the coverlets of a poorhouse bed. The old times were, after all, very hollow times! We are fond of reading about the hospitality of the Madisonian age, but could so many have accepted it if all were prosperous?

In our time work being the fate and the redemption of us all, the District Almshouse contains few government employees. Now and then, as Mr. Hodgson told us, some clerk, spent with sickness or exhausted by evil indulgences, takes the inevitable road across the vacant plains, and eats his pauper ration in silence or in resignation, but the age is better, not, perhaps, because the heart of man is changed, but in that society is organized upon truer principles of honor, of manfulness, and of labor. The class of well-bred young men who are ashamed to admit that they must earn their living, and who affect the company of gamblers and chicken-fighters, has some remnants left amongst us, but they find no aliment in the public sentiment, and hear no response in the public tone. Duelling is done; visiting one's relatives as a profession is done; thrift is no more a reproach, and even the reputation of being a miser is rather complimentary to a man. The worst chapters of humanity in America are those narrating the indigence of the old agricultural families on the streams of the Chesapeake; the quarterly sale of a slave to supply the demands of a false understanding of generosity; the inhuman revelling of one's friends upon the last possessions of his family, holding it to be a jest to precipitate his ruin; the wild orgies held on the glebe of some old parish church, horses



hitched to the gravestones, and punch mixed in the baptismal font ; and at the last, delirium, impotence, decay ! Let those who would understand it read Bishop Meade, or descend the Potomac and Rappahannock, even at this day, and cross certain thresholds.

The Washington Poor-house seems to be well arranged, except in one respect : under the same roof, divided only by a partition and a corridor, the vicious are lodged for punishment and the unfortunate for refuge.

We passed through a part of the building where, amongst old, toothless women, semi-imbecile girls—the relicts of error, the heirs of affliction—three babies of one mother were in charge of a strong, rosy Irish nurse. Two of them, twins, were in her lap, and a third upon the floor, hallooing for joy. Such noble specimens of childhood we had never seen ; heads like Caesar's, eyes bright as the depths of wells into which one laughs and receives his laughter back, and complexions and carriage of high birth. The woman was suckling them all, and all crowded alternately, so that they made the bare floors and walls light up with pictures. A few yards off, though out of hearing, were the thick forms of criminals, drunkards, wantons, and vagrants, seen through the iron bars of their wickets, raising the croon and song of an idle din, drumming on the floor, or moving to and fro restlessly. Beneath this part of the Almshouse were cells where bad cases were locked up. The association of the poor and the wicked affected us painfully.

Strolling into the syphilitic wards, where, in the awful contemplation of their daily, piecemeal decay, the silent victims were stretched all day upon their cots ; amongst the idiotic and the crazed ; into the apartments of the aged poor, seeing, let us hope, blessed visions of life beyond these shambles ; and drinking in, as we walked, the solemn but needful lessons of our own possibilities, and the mutations of our nature, we stood at last amongst the graves of the Almshouse dead—those who have escaped the dissecting knife. Scattered about with little stones and mounds here and there, under the occasional sullen



green of cedars, a dead-cart and a spade sticking up as symbols, and the neglected river, deserted as the Styx, plashing against the low banks, we felt the sobering melancholy of the spot and made the prayer of "Give me neither poverty nor riches !"





## CHAPTER XVIII.

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### AMENDMENTS PROPOSED TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES. OUGHT THE SENATE TO BE ELECTED BY THE PEOPLE?.

The experience of more than fourscore years has shown that many things in our Government need amendment. A great many propositions have been made to effect reforms in the nature of our Government. Mr. Morton has proposed to abolish the electoral college; Mr. Robertson to establish a tribunal which shall decide questions in the electoral college; Mr. Pomeroy to make the States regulate the basis of citizenship in their own way; Mr. Drake to empower the federal government to put down disorder in the States; Mr. Yates to make foreign born citizens eligible to the Presidency; Mr. Davis to establish a constitutional tribunal of which each State shall have one judge to be paid by the State, and not by the Government; Mr. Stewart to compel free schools in each State and territory; Mr. Sumner to limit the President to one term and abolish the Vice-Presidency; Mr. Lawrence to choose electors by a different system; Mr. Ingersoll to give Congress the power of making United States notes legal tenders; Mr. Julian to enact female suffrage; Mr. Burdett to forbid States and corporations levying taxes for any sectarian purpose; Mr. Coburn to make federal officials elective by the people of the State or Territory where they shall reside; Mr. Potter to stop the chartering of private corporations by Congress; Mr. Potter also to



make the President's term six years; Mr. Coghlan to stop the sale of public lands except to actual settlers (lost by 85 to 87); Mr. King to make amalgamation illegal and to separate the races in the public schools; Mr. McNealy to stop import and excise duties and to raise revenue by direct taxation; Mr. Morgan to make naturalized citizens eligible for President and Vice-President (81 yeas, 65 nays, lost); Mr. Comingo to admit no State which does not contain a full representative population; Mr. McCrary to elect Postmasters and make all offices hold for four years and be removable by the President only for bad morals; Mr. Snapp to make judges of the Supreme Court non-eligible for the Presidency; Mr. McIntyre to give the Supreme Court original and enlarged appellate jurisdiction; Mr. Parker to make Senators and Members non-eligible for the Presidency; Mr. Hawley to make Senators elective by the people; Mr. Jones to give territorial delegates all the rights of Congressmen and to enact female suffrage.

In addition to all these proposed amendments, a natural religious association of which a judge of the Supreme Court is a member, wants "Almighty God and the Lord Jesus Christ" violently inserted into the preamble to the constitution after the words, "We the people of the United States." It is apprehended that in this way we shall become immediately a Christian Government.

The happiest accident since the close of the War has been the *Crédit Mobilier* exposure. It has tumbled some hollow effigies of reputation, and proved that eminent success cannot cure a lying tongue, nor ennoble sinister character. But, in the moral needs of a nation, the unworthy must go, and not the exposure, but the concealment, of their crimes is the sign of disease. It is better to see the purloiner and the pirate on the gibbet of public opinion, instead of blandly plying their craft in the security of eminence.

About this period it would be timely for some of those old-fashioned sermons on the driving of peddlers out of the Temple,—particularly the peddlers who sold doves, the soft and





cooing kind of chaps, who disguised the trade in the innocence of the commodity: sleek and harmless little *Crédit Mobilier*.

The exposure of thieves is a good sign.

It is the first step to health, and its effects have been already extroradinary. The franking fraud has been abolished; the Steamship-Subsidy bill to Australia,—a mere grab in the name of a trade which sailing ships only can do with profit,—has failed; the Goat Island plunder has been repudiated by the very Congress which had previously passed it; the Cotton-Tax Refunding bill has perished; Pomeroy has been pitched out of the Senate; Caldwell, Clayton, Pinchback, Carolina Patterson, and some others will go out, or the Senate itself will know the sentiment of this country by other than newspaper-leaders. Finally, Oliver P. Morton has advocated the abolition of the Electoral College, and—*mirabile dictu!* Mr. Harlan has proposed the election of Senators by the people. He knows how it is himself, since he got \$30,000 railway money to elect himself. Out of the fullness of the conscience and the efficacy of exposure, the mouth speaketh!

In the Senate of the United States, Jan. 31, 1873, Mr. Harlan asked, and, by unanimous consent, obtained, leave to bring in the following joint resolution; which was read twice and ordered to be printed:

*Joint Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.*

*Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress Assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article be proposed to the Legislatures of the several States as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which, when ratified by three fourths of said Legislatures, shall be valid as part of the Constitution, namely:*

ARTICLE XVI.

SECTION 1. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the people of the several States for six years; and the electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislature; and, if vacancies happen by resignation, or otherwise, in the Senatorial representation from any State, the Executive authority thereof shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies.



It may appear impossible to secure a two-thirds vote in the Senate for the proposition of an amendment which will burn the ships behind many of the corsairs and conquistadores there. But knaves slouch along in the wake of upright people, even in the Senate, and vigorous agitation of the subject, and its espousal by the abler men of that body, will silence the tongue of him whose unworthiness will be admitted by the act of opposition. The Senate of the United States was originally designed to reflect the selected sentiment of the wisest electors in each State,—the Legislatures. It was supposed that the hearty emulation of the States would keep high, and apart from party management and momentary passion, the exalted offices of these censors upon more popular legislation; that the length of the term of Senator would ordinarily survive the duration of a party; and that a body of grave and reflecting men, unusually versed in affairs, would bridge over Administrations and party periods, and, never expiring, prolong an aristocracy of intellect, experience, and calm demeanor. Such was the beautiful conception of the Senate.

In the course of time, the Senate has come to be the chief object of political conspiracy, and in every State the Governorship is prostituted to obtain it,—men walking over their oaths and sense of Commonwealth duty to bound into the Senate, and stay there two years longer than the President can keep his office.

The voting constituency of a State like Pennsylvania is reduced from hundreds of thousands to hundreds, in order that a man may spend a lifetime in the Senate, who could never be elected Governor, and against whose name a resolution of censure and disgrace is recorded on the Journal of the House of Representatives.

The Senate, in its present organization, is suggestive of the steady decline of its manhood and conduct.

The presiding officer of the Senate, Schuyler Colfax, the Vice-President, has solicited an inquiry into his character on the charges of corruption and perjury, which were refused by





the Senate on the ground that impeachment was the only method to reach him, and it was now too late to adopt that, because, although the presiding officer might have been interested in jobbery for the whole period of his term, he was soon to retire to private life, after declinations too numerous to mention. And how could a man remember his *Crédit Mobilier* stock who had so often forgotten to retire at the time he promised?

The predecessor of Schuyler Colfax in the Senate, B. F. Wade, had promised to divide the raiment of his country, had he been made President, amongst such people as E. B. Ward, John Conness, and other drovers. He missed the Presidency by the votes of Lyman Trumbull and others, and has since been riding oxen, in a congenial way, through the jobbing pastures of Santo Domingo.

The successor of Schuyler Colfax, Henry Wilson, has just escaped the *Crédit Mobilier* implication by such a close shave that we hope it will steady him up for the next four years, and that certain of the angels will have charge concerning him, lest at any time, while uttering a platitude, he dash his foot against a stone.

The President of the caucus, and vice-presiding officer went about the city, saying that there is nothing in Caldwell's case requiring the Senate to take any action,—thereby exonerating bribery. He is an unblushing defender of every man who took the *Crédit Mobilier* stock.

The Executive clerk of the Senate is a carpet-bagger, formerly a clergyman, who is a publisher of a journal in this city of which the *Washington Herald* spoke as follows last week: "How can we expect honesty in public life when a Senator (Harkan), the Executive Clerk of the Senate (Morris), and the Paymaster's Department of the Army (?) unite to publish a journal at the Capitol defending every exposed rascal of Congress." The paper thus spoken of is now defending Pomerooy, who, perhaps, has an interest in it.

There are about twenty Senators who fill the full measure





of their station, and these could be even more readily elected by the people than by the State Legislatures. Of these, four, and possibly five, are from New England, four from the Middle States, seven from the Western States, and five from the Southern States. The House of Representatives contains twofold the average talent and character of the Senate.

In the year 1862, John C. Breckinridge, Jesse D. Bright, and Truett Polk were expelled from the Senate; but their offence of treason, then general with an entire section, exonerates them from the more contemptible charges rife at this period.

The Senators of Rome were forbidden to engage in commercial pursuits, and that great body kept its character for a long period, until Sylla, Cæsar, and other ambitious captains made it an instrument; and, at last, one of the Caldwells of that period, a certain Senator Didius Julianus, bought the Imperial crown for about two hundred pounds sterling per vote, or 6,250 drachms.

The life, antecedents, and reign of Didius Julianus present an opportunity for parallel readings.

Mr. Julianus was a good trader, and his commercial word was good. For a business man, he was of the frankest nature. His checks, when he bought an office, were promptly paid, and, like men now-a-days, he thought it was of no consequence what the line of business was, provided you could get into it.

The Prætorian Guard, otherwise the Kansas Legislature, had cut off the head of Pertinax Ross, the Emperor, for voting not guilty on the trial of Andrew Johnson, Sulpicianus (or Sidney Clark) began to treat for the Imperial dignity, but he demanded the office by right of party fealty and performance, and said too little on the important subject of a *quid pro quo*. At this announcement, "His freedmen and his parasites," says one of the newspaper authorities of his time, "easily convinced Julianus that he deserved the throne, and earnestly conjured him to embrace so fortunate an opportunity." This picture does not seem to smack of antiquity, but to be a plain passage in Kansas politics.



Didius Julianus was indulging himself in the luxury of the table when he heard that the purple was for sale. He took out his lead-pencil, and made a computation as to how much the prize would cost, and what the opportunities were for a trade in the office. He bid against Sulpicianus at the foot of the ramparts,—we had almost said in the town of Topeka; and at \$1,000 in gold per man,—a sum, considering the increase of money, not widely different from Topeka's prices,—he knocked off the crown.

He then made a speech couched in the Pomeroy vein. He expatiated on the freedom of his election, his own eminent virtues, and his full assurance of the affections of the Senate. The Senate voted him a golden statue, but, with that remarkable sagacity which only a business Senator can possess, Julianus remarked that "he preferred one of brass as more lasting; for he had always observed that the statues of former Emperors were soon destroyed, and those of brass alone remained, not being worth destruction." If the above were signed "Gath," instead of Edward Gibbon, the loyal party press would go for it; but the chief practical difference is, that the latter wrote about a nation destroyed by its corruption, which might have been arrested had it possessed such an historian, and been aroused by his depictions of those evil days.

There was indignation throughout the Roman Empire, but the Senate alone, whose conspicuous station and ample possessions exacted the strictest caution, dissembled their sentiments, and met the affected civility of Julianus with smiles of complacency. This is a good piece of sculpture of a Senate to this day,—the difference being that Didius dealt with Conscrip Fathers, and Caldwell with Bankscrip Fathers.

The army, however, concluded to take Julianus in hand, particularly after its General, Septimius Severus,—a native of Africa, and doubtless a progenitor of Senator Pinchback,—had offered every soldier £400 to investigate Julianus with a spear. Julianus, however, called on the Prætorian party, to which he had been truly loyal, to defend him in committee or





otherwise, and sought to "negotiate" with his rapidly-advancing enemy. But the Prætorians heard the long, dull roar of the whole empire, and abandoned their creation after his brief reign of sixty-six days. That Severus should have marched from the confines of Pannonia (or Kansas) so rapidly, is proof, says Gibbon, "of the goodness of the roads, and the indolent and subdued temper of the provinces."

The dismayed Prætorians cut off the head of Julianus, and were in turn banished and dispensed with by the empire.

This seems to be a good lesson all around. Julianus, however, was spared the humiliation of buying a seat in the Senate from a set of negro field-hands, like Patterson, of South Carolina, or of buying a patent for it.



## CHAPTER XIX.

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### SOME OF THE BUREAUX OF OUR GOVERNMENT VISITED—LIGHT SHED UPON THEIR MANAGEMENT AND CONTENTS.

Some parts of the Federal Government are never noticed here, because they have not associated with politics, and, therefore, never become the subject of party news.

Few persons ever hear of the National Observatory, the only public building here which stands near our meridian of longitude; and where the computations are made by which American sailors grope their way over the main. Few know anything of the Columbia Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, one of those extraordinary enterprises of the Gallaudet family, where deaf mutes are educated for professions, and to be teachers of other institutions. The Coast Survey is also a lost institution to the great mass of Americans, although it is better known abroad than any bureau of our Government.

It is the nearest of all the public ateliers to the Capitol edifice—only one block. A small tin sign set up against the jamb of the open door of a very old brick residence, has been its only advertisement for forty years. This old residence is one of half a dozen stretched along old New Jersey Avenue and on the scarp of Capitol Hill, which are tenanted by the office employees of a service embracing the largest area of labor in the government. Some of the buildings are across the way; some are in a newer, smaller row on the same Avenue; one building is a fire-proof safe, big enough for a family to live



in; the main office is in Law's old block, a highly respectable, thread bare, Bleak House sort of pile, which is cracking and groaning through its hollow concavities more and more every year.

If you have any business with the Coast Survey—and it is not to folks in general a “show” department—you might venture to peep into its office door some morning, and there you would see a bare vestibule, a couple of inhospitable naked rooms for clerks, and for the rest a couple of worn and creaking stairs, leading to former bed-chambers. Back passages, also uncarpeted, conduct to some old and would-be stately saloons, where a few steel engraved plates of the coast surveyings hang, as well as photographic pictures of the founders and Superintendents of this beneficent undertaking.

As we wander around these grim and rheumatic old apartments, over the half-faded carpets, amongst the quaint patterns of furniture and plush in former woods, and modes of weaving, and feel the mouldering, dry smell of the rented rooms where science is driven by democracy, we may well experience a sensitiveness as to what a little chance the useful, the diligent, and the conscientious attain amongst us, and how busy are the criticisms of ignorance, calling itself “practicability,” upon matters beyond its ken. The meanest committee of Congress has a fire-proof parlor, walnut and leather furniture, a sumptuous clerk and a lackey.

But here is the Coast Survey, suggested by Jefferson, begun by Gallatin, organized by Hassler, perfected by Baché, and recognized by every learned body in this world,—this institution may be said to exist by the oversight of politicians; it scarcely knows where to lay its head; it lives like the poor scholar, up back-attics, and in neglected dormitories; it steadily refuses to be regulated by politicians, and it only gets its regular appropriation because of the ignorance of the caucus Congressmen, who are afraid to be voted asses if they denounce it.

One of the most interesting personages of the Coast Survey is Mathiot, the electrotyper, who has been at his business for the Government about a third of a century.





He is a Marylander, a quiet, spectacled, grave man, below the medium size, and he discovered the art of separating the engraved plates of coast survey charts from the metallic impressions taken of them—these impressions being used to print from, while the original plate is deposited in the fire-proof magazine. This discovery has saved ours and other governments tens of thousands of dollars, but it is needless to say that Mathiot never got any recompense, and perhaps little recognition for it. He is one of those ancient, slow, dutiful men, such as grow up and ripen, and are happy under benignant governments. Some years ago he went down the river on the memorable excursion which killed a part of Tyler's Cabinet, and when the gun called the "Peacemaker" burst, Mathiot heard the gunmakers discuss the causes. They agreed that all the vibrations of the metal were caught in the acute angle where the breech was pealed down to the barrel—tons of pressure concentrated upon a spot. Mathiot got to thinking this over, as it applied to the substance he should interpose between his plates. He had tried wax, and many other mediums, but the problem seemed to be something which should receive and deaden the whole force of electrotyping,—not make the plates cohere, nor yet deface the original plate. After much groping he hit upon alcohol and iodine. This, transferred by galvanism, makes a thin coating between the plate and the metal copy, of the scarcely conceivable thinness of 1,400 of the billionth part of an inch. Then, by filing off the edges of the two plates, the copy comes off absolutely perfect. Prior to that discovery the costly plates were crushed and defaced in the press, and were good for nothing after a few hundred impressions. But by the Mathiot process a dozen printing plates could be produced from one engraving.

It is the pleasantest sight in this bureau, to see the plates separated, and the tin burnished silver faces of the large and delicate charts come perfect from their delicate embrace, every line, figure, fluting and hair clearly defined, and the microscope showing no difference whatever. They have not touched, yet



they have imparted and received the whole story. It makes the dogma of the Immaculate Conception credible.

To reduce the original drawings of charts to plate and standard size, the camera is used. The sheets are printed on a hand press, the ink being rolled over frequently. There is no line engraving in the world superior to these charts.

By the establishment of the Coast Survey the sea is made as sure and as familiar as the land. Almost every port in the Union has derived benefit from this organization.

A Judge of the Supreme Court was telling me, a few days ago, about some inordinate fees which counsel had received, within his knowledge. For example : David Dudley Field received \$300,000 from the Erie Railroad. William M. Stewart was paid \$25,000 cash by the Gould-Curry silver mine, and so many feet of the ore, which altogether netted him \$200,000. Jeremiah S. Black received \$60,000 from the New Alexander mine, and a few months ago he sued them for \$75,000 in addition, and received judgment. Wm. M. Evarts has been paid \$25,000 for defending Andrew Johnson, and his annual income is \$125,000. He recently charged \$5,000 for one speech, which occupied eighty minutes. The Justice who gave this information, decried the high charges which lawyers everywhere receive in one day, making no apology for extorting \$100, where, ten years ago, \$5 and \$10 were deemed good fees.

A few days ago I had the pleasure of passing through the document and folding-rooms of the Capitol, which are under the custody of the Doorkeeper of the House. If you understand by the Doorkeeper of Congress, a person who stands on guard at the entrance thereof, you greatly err ; for the doorkeeper has more than one hundred employees, and is literally a person in authority, saying to one person go and he goeth, and to another come and he cometh. The chief subject of superintendence with the doorkeeper is that of the printed bills, acts, memorials, petitions, reports, etc., of Congress, which are filed, preserved, and distributed in a series of rooms called the document room, and he also has all the printed matter of Congress







wrapped up and mailed, after it has been franked. The Chief Doorkeeper's salary is \$2,650, and his Chief of Folding Room and Chief of Document Room receive each \$2,500. The folding-rooms lie in the cellars and clefts of the old Capitol building, and comprise twenty-six rooms, some of which are below the surface of the ground, and are packed with layers of books twelve deep, the fall of a pile of which would crush a man to death. About 260,000 copies of the Agricultural Report alone are printed every year, and these will probably weigh two pounds a-piece, or 260 tons. Each member of Congress has about 1,000 copies of this book, for distribution, and all these copies are put up and warehoused in the folding-room, subject to the member's frank, and when they are to be mailed they are packed in strong canvas bags, of the capacity of two bushels of grain measure. Sometimes 200 of these heavy bags are sent of a single night to the Post-office, to take their turn on the much-abused mail train. The boys who put up speeches and books for the mail are paid by the quantity of work done, and good hands can make nearly \$50 a month. It is a busy scene in the depths of the old Capitol building, to see wagons come filled with documents, long rows of boys sealing envelopes, and others working with twine, and the custodians and directors of the work are generally free to admit that there is much unnecessary printing done, and that many of the books printed are stored away and forgotten, in the vaults of the mighty labyrinth.

The document-room occupies what was once the Post Office for the House of Representatives, and a part of the lobby and galleries of that celebrated old hall, now many years deserted for the new wing, where subsequent to the year 1818, the popular body of the Legislature assembled under the Speakership of Henry Clay, James K. Polk, John Bell, Philip Barbour, Andrew Stevenson, Robert C. Winthrop, Howell Cobb, and Linn Boyd. Here upwards of two millions of copies of bills and documents are annually received, distributed, and filed, for nearly the whole of the vast business of Congress is done by



aid of printing,—the bills, acts, etc., being on the desk for every member at the moment of debating them. The usual number of copies of a bill printed is 750, and, if five amendments should be proposed, this would make 3,750 copies. If, therefore, each Congress should pass or consider 1,000 bills, each having five amendments, there would be 15,000,000 copies issued. About 20,000 copies of the laws of the United States are printed every year at a cost of several thousand dollars, and the sum of \$689,000 was expended last year in all sorts of Congressional literature. The documents of Congress go back to the first Congress, and a manuscript index to them is kept, but the repository for them is neither fire-proof nor of sufficient capacity, so that they are in danger of combustion or hopeless confusion. The Capitol edifice is already too small for the multifarious offices and uses required of it, and we shall soon be compelled to meet the question of a general enlargement of the whole affair or a relinquishment of much of the work which has been imposed upon the legislative body.

We shall have to expect differences of opinion on such questions as concern the gravity and self-knowledge of the whole Federal Republic.

Take this case: The Commissioner of the Land Office, Joseph Wilson, is a man of wide reading and wonderful industry, and every year he prepares a very voluminous report upon the condition of the public domain, not only returning the statement of the new surveys, the quantity of land sold, and such technical tables as belong to his duty, but he also composes and throws together in an admirable way, the latest problems of empire and extension, the history of gold, and many miscellaneous statements of the highest interest. In addition to this he has handsomely measured and executed in his office, by accomplished German map-makers, such charts as will illustrate his report. One of these maps in particular, intended to show, upon Mercator's projection, the past, the present, and the prospective routes to, and possessions of, the Pacific, is entirely unique and admirable, and it is, perhaps, twelve feet square.





The question at once arises in the mind of every Congressman, "Shall we accept and print that report and have the expensive maps appended to it engraved?"

Here are two arguments at once; and where would you, if a Congressman, stand upon the question?

1. Pro.: It was good of the Commissioner to do so much good work, and he ought to be encouraged in it. He is justly proud of his valuable map, and it will do much good to scatter it broadcast with the report. The nation rejoices to see itself in the light of its rivals, and to see the century in the light of the past. Few officials care to do overwork, and Wilson's reports are as readable as they are important.

2. Contra: The Commissioner's reports are too long, and undertake too much schoolmastership. His big map will cost \$200,000 to engrave it. The Republic is not a high school, and a Land Commissioner is not a Professor of History. If we print this report it will be putting a premium on extra and unnecessary printing, and if we circulate the map the private map-makers will find their trade gone.

Where do you stand on this question?

Yet, this is one of the innumerable topics coming up to require to be voted upon, and this one was discussed last session in all varieties of ways. Charles Sumner thought the Federal State ought to waste no expense to understand and properly represent itself, both before its own citizens and the world. Mr. Anthony thought economy and a due restriction of Federal endeavors inclined us to reject the map.

I think that I should have voted with Anthony and against Sumner, and on this ground: Under our institutions the Government has no business to try to do too much for us. If it content itself with giving us a fair chance, the people of themselves will write treatises and engrave maps, particularly upon special topics. An international copyright law, which will cost the Government nothing, will at once raise authorship to a profession here, and out of authorship will come maps, facts, excursions, discoveries, and books, all the more valuable that





the people were rational enough to do them without law. Too much help at the centre makes helplessness in the extremities. Mr. Wilson's maps ought to be deposited in the Library of Congress, and any map-maker should be allowed to take copies of them at his own expense. Help the Library, Mr. Sumner! and give us a copyright law, and national instruction from American sources will ensue.

"Are you a revenue detective?" said I to a man of my acquaintance.

"No, not exactly. I had been studying up whiskey frauds, and I told Mr. Boutwell, who is an old friend of mine, that I believed that I could recover some millions of money lost during the years 1866, 1867, 1868."

"You see," continued Mr. Martin, "that during those years of Johnson's administration the revenue derived from whiskey was only about \$15,000,000 a year, although five times as much whiskey was distilled then as now, and although the tax, which is now 50 cents a gallon, was then \$2 a gallon. Now, the revenue from whiskey obtained during the first year of Grant's administration has been \$72,000,000, and I believe that \$200,000,000 can be recovered from the distilleries and the defaulting revenue officials at civil suit. My investigations have been confined to New York, where I am confident that I can recover \$50,000,000."

"What was the nature of those frauds?"

"It is my belief that in nine-tenths of the cases the government officials were the corrupters of the distillers. Those corrupt officials escaped summary expulsion by the operations of the Tenure-of-Office law, for, even when Johnson was willing to turn out a perjured collector or assessor, that willingness was interpreted by the Senate to be a political prejudice, and the rascal always kept his place by proving that he was an anti-Johnson man. The distillers have almost invariably admitted to me that they would have made more money, with less wear and tear of conscience, had they paid the whole tax and traded on the square."



"Explain how the frauds were committed generally."

"Well, the act of fraud was generally perpetrated in this manner: The law compels every distillery to have two receiving tubs, into which the high wines or whiskey is run, and no liquor is to be run into those tubs after dark. The revenue officer is supposed to come to the distillery and watch the whiskey drawn from the tubs into barrels, at which time he takes note of the number of gallons, and collects the tax. I have found distilleries of the largest capacity to return fifteen or twenty barrels a day, whereas a thousand, fifteen hundred, or two thousand barrels was probably the actual quantity manufactured. The fraud was, of course, perpetrated by collusion with the revenue officers, and in this way: An underground pipe extended from the bottom of the receiving tubs to a neighboring building rented by the distiller and called a rectifying room. If the underground pipe was suspected or found to be awkward, some boards were loosened in the roof above, and a hose or pipe dropped into the whiskey, which was then pumped by a hand pump or a steam engine into the rectifying room, where it was secretly barreled. Now, we come to that part of the fraud by which it was made next to impossible to trace the illegal whiskey into the hands of the buyer. The distiller would go to a whiskey dealer or speculator and conclude a mock purchase from him of, say, two thousand barrels of whiskey. When the illegal whiskey from the rectifying room was sold and shipped, therefore, the distiller's books showed that he has purchased two thousand barrels of crude whiskey of a certain party, and rectified it merely; while a detective, tracing up this whiskey, would find the books of the pseudo seller to correspond with those of the distiller; everything, therefore, seemed to be fair and square, and the detectives were baffled. But, I am able to show, even where I cannot prove such a sale to have been a false one, that the government has a right to damages because, in almost every case this mock sale is marked down at a price below the tax, and this of itself the law supposes to be *primâ facie* evidence of evasion."





"But, Mr. Martin, were there not door-keepers placed upon all the distilleries?"

"Certainly; but they, like the gaugers, and all the rest up to collectors, were put upon salary, and found it convenient to slip away whenever necessary. I am prepared to show that as much as \$15,000 a week was paid for months and months by some single distilleries, and from that down to \$100 and \$500 a week, as blackmail. In many cases the first instalments of these enormous subsidies were paid as flat blackmail. Let me give you an example: A distiller, in one case which I investigated, was a matter-of-fact German, who was mentally incapable of keeping himself informed upon the intricate system of laws affecting the distilleries, which were constantly being amended, repaired, or repealed by Congress. The character of legislation upon this subject is of itself a snare and a pitfall to the simple man. Well, my old German distiller, knowing little of some new turn in the law, was waited upon one day by a revenue officer, who told him that he was operating illegally, and that his place must be forthwith closed up.

"'Why,' says my simple-minded man, 'I had no intention of violating the regulations. If you close me up now you will ruin me. Here I have stored away an immense quantity of grain and other material. Is there no way of avoiding this seizure?'

"'I don't know,' says the revenue man, dubiously, 'I have only one set of orders. But you may keep on until to-morrow, when I will see the Collector. I won't close you up to-day.'

"The next day back comes the revenue man, with a serious face, and says:

"'We have talked this matter over at the office, and we don't want to shut you up. We think that you are a good man, and that you mean to do right. I am instructed to say that \$5,000 will fix this matter for the present.'

"The distiller sees no way of escape. Time is precious to him. So he gives his check for five thousand dollars drawn to 'cash.' Thus begins a series of blackmailings, and there is no



going back, because the distiller's offence is a State's Prison one. At last weary of these repeated exactions, he agrees with the revenue officer to pay a fixed salary every week.

"Take another case: A man has put up a distillery; he finds the tax on whiskey is two dollars a gallon, and yet that he can buy it in the market for a dollar and a quarter, so he goes to the Collector.

" 'I have spent a hundred thousand on my distillery,' he says, 'and I propose to go into the business; but, if I pay the tax and sell at the market rates, I do not see how I can make anything.'

"Well,' answers the Collector, 'you must do as others do. I will send a man to you to-morrow, who will tell you how to act.'

"The next day a man goes down and debauches the distiller with a statement of how others do. Thus a mighty net-work of villainy covers the whole trade. The distillers get to look upon the government officials as a class of blackmailers, and, as I have said, at least a quarter of a million dollars has been lost to the Treasury. The distillers put upon their guard, effect an organization for mutual defense, and send their attorneys to Washington. In the pursuit of these discoveries, I have been opposed by the majority of the revenue officers in New York most bitterly. But I believe that the distillers, as a class, have been seduced into dishonesty, and, instead of sending them to jail, I am in favor of beginning a series of civil suits to recover the money lost during the years I have named.

At this point Mr. Martin gathered himself up like a box-ter-rapin, and refused to make whiskey frauds any more mysterious.

Washington City is the paradise of blank-book and bill-head makers. There are about half-a-dozen firms of this sort on Pennsylvania Avenue, which keep up an ornamental shop front, sell an envelope or a bottle of ink twice a week, and for the rest exist, or rather prosper, upon government contracts. The fattest take these worthies have is the Interior Department, whose Secretary makes his stationery contracts blind-folded.





A couple of ex-Commissioners of Patents seem to have seconded him to the extent of ordering about ten thousand dollars in stationery every month, and when, some time ago, Hon. Elisha Foote took charge of the office, and found that a thousand dollars a month would be an extravagant outlay for this material, the combined cohorts of Browning, the stationers, the Patent agents, and the corrupt clerks of the Patent Office in collusion with the swindlers, charged home upon him.

The subject-matter of this collusion was the merry contract of Dempsey and O'Toole, a pair of gentlemen whose losses in the lost cause of J. Davis & Co., naturally made them objects of sympathy. They were awarded the contract for stationery and printing for the entire Interior Department, being the lowest bidders, according to the extraordinary description of bidding in vogue in Washington. This manner of bidding is something like this; the stationer sees that among a large number of articles there are needed gold pens, steel pens, expensive bound books, and envelopes. He makes a mental guess that not more than twenty-five gold pens will be needed by the whole department; therefore, he offers to furnish these at seven cents each, the price of the same being, perhaps, three dollars each. But steel pens, he guesses, will be required to the amount of a hundred thousand; the price of these he sets at five times their value. So with the few expensive ledgers. These he bids for at half their value, while he charges 300 per cent. profit upon common envelopes, the demand for which is enormous. By taking the average of an audacious bid like this it will be found in the aggregate lower than an honest contract; for the department is unable to specify precisely the amount of each article it may wish to use, and the stationer expects to regulate this use by collusion with parties inside the office.

When Mr. Elisha Foote, the Commissioner of Patents, came to his office, he found that under this fraudulent contract he was burdened with useless stationery at enormous rates. Bond paper, worth two cents a sheet, charged eight cents, lay in the vaults of the Patent Office, enough to last twenty years. Nev-





ertheless, the contractors demanded to furnish \$24,000 worth more at the same extravagant rate, and claimed that a verbal contract to that effect had been made with A. M. Stout, ex Commissioner. Mr. Foote then, to test the honesty of the contract, ordered three hundred gold pens at the low rate annexed in the schedule; at this the stationers raised the cry that Commissioner Foote was profligately buying gold pens for all his clerks. Small paper-covered entry-books, as big as a boy's "copy-book," worth twenty-five cents, were charged twenty-five dollars! Fifty thousand strips of paste-board, three inches square, worth a mill apiece, were charged four cents apiece. A bill was exhibited, paid by one of Mr. Foote's predecessors, for twenty-eight thousand Patent Office heads and forms whereas only eleven thousand had been delivered. Interrogated upon this, the stationers, appearing by Richard Merrick, their counsel, alleged that they had been permitted to collect in advance and use the government funds in their business. Asked why the additional heads were not forthcoming, they accused Mr. Foote of taking away the printing plate.

In brief, Mr. Foote refused to pay the bill of \$24,000 without an investigation. This was ordered to take place before three patent-officers, B. F. James, of Illinois, Norris Peters, of Delaware, and E. W. W. Griffin of the District of Columbia. This report is one of the most extraordinary pieces of white-washing in the history of Washington audacity.

"The terms and conditions of the contract proper," says this commission, "exclude, necessarily, any inquiry into its character or of the prices stipulated to be paid, unless fraud is shown."

"And we are also of the opinion that bills presented to the Patent Office, accepted and paid, are also an estoppel on the part of the office as to the character of goods purchased and the prices paid therefor. Such purchases may be considered a matter of contract," etc., \* \* \* "other matters that refer to the interests of the Office, in which Dempsey & O'Toole have not by any testimony been implicated, and which



in their nature should not be made public by the commission, will form the subject of a separate report."

Meantime Secretary Browning, with unseemly haste, twice ordered Commissioner Foote to cash this bill. The Commissioner said he would go to jail first. Arrangements were then made to take him in front, flank, and rear, by threat, inuendo, and storm, and while the stout old gentleman was wondering whether it was wise or possible to be honest in any public place, Congress happily came to his relief, despite the objections of the Democrats, and forbade the bill to be paid without investigation.

This case is convincing that the whole business of contracting for stationery at Washington is unprincipled, that waste and profligacy of stationery is universal, and that the Patent Office is full of people in collusion with outside scoundrels.

Here comes the manuscript of the Secretary of State, and it is set up by sworn compositors, who dare not disclose it. Here most generally by observance, but not at present by breach, comes the first draft of the President's message, and all its accompanying papers. The long reports of Committees of Congress upon every conceivable question, are put into type here. In a word, no where else is any printing done for the general Government except the debates of Congress, which are given out by contract, and the bonds and notes of the United States, which are printed in the Treasury Department. In this building even the money orders are printed and stamped, which go through the post-office like so many drafts. So are the lithographic plates prepared here to illustrate the large reports of explorations.

In 1860, Cornelius Wendell, a celebrated typographical and political jobber, sold this establishment to the United States for \$135,000, and it is now the very largest printing office in the world.

Among the public printers have been Gales and Seaton, Jonathan Elliott, Armstrong of Tennessee, Duff Green, Blair and Rives, Cornelius Wendell, and John D. Defrees, who has held the position since 1861.





If there is anything that is pretty, it is to see a pretty girl on an Adams' press, feeding the monster so daintily.

Here is a double row of them—Una and the lion reduced to machinery—presses and girls, the press looking up as if it would like to “chaw” the girl up, if it could only get loose from the floor, and the girl dropping a pair of black eyes into the cold heart of the press, all warm now with friction, ashamed of its grimy mouth, burning to slip its belt and trample the paper to ribbons, and turn bondage into bliss. She, meantime, touches it with her little foot, thrills it with the gliding of her garment, poises over it on one white little finger the plain gold ring of some more Christian engagement, and black with jealousy, the press plunges into its slavery again, dishevelled with ink; dripping varnish, cold and keen of teeth, the imp goes on, and the beautiful tyrant only smiles.

The government printing-office involves a yearly expense of from one million and a-half dollars to over two millions, and this does not include the printing of the debates of Congress, which is done by contract at the Globe office, and which costs seven dollars a column to report them, and six dollars (I believe) a copy per session for the Globe, in which they are printed.

The five successive stages of this building are busy in scenes and suggestions worthy of our attention, but the limits of your pages and your patience demand more substantial matter.

Government printers get a trifle better prices than are paid elsewhere in the country. Steady work will give one \$1500 a year in this manufactory. The work girls get from nine to twelve dollars a week. The printers are almost always in excess, however.

The great Bullock press cost \$25,490. In one year new type added cost \$18,804; printing ink, \$19,717; coal, seven hundred tons; new machinery, \$5,000.

In the bindery, four thousand Russian leather skins were



used, seven hundred and sixty packs of gold leaf (costing nearly \$7,000), nearly five thousand dollars worth of twine, and as much of glue.

The Executive Departments, with the Courts, required in 1867 about \$757,000 worth of printing, while the House of Representatives ran up a bill of \$454,000, and the Senate \$186,000. In addition to this, Acts of Congress warranted about \$233,000 additional of work done for miscellaneous objects. Mr. Seward was a dainty hand with the types, and would have no bindings but the best. His bill in one year was about \$32,000. The Supreme Courts and its satellite courts take less than half as much, or nearly \$15,000. The Congressional printer himself has a little bill of \$700, but the Attorney-General is most modest of all, not reaching the figure of \$600, nor does the new Department of Education consume more. The Agricultural Department, with its huge reports, passes \$32,000. The monstrous appetite of the Treasury leads everything, with nearly \$300,000, and the War Department follows it with \$148,000. Next come the Post Office, Navy and Interior Departments, ranging from \$78,000 to \$52,000.

No enlightened Government in this age can do without public documents, but the whole system of distributing them should be changed. There are, perhaps, 3,000 odd counties in the United States. Let Government content itself with presenting a copy of every public work to these, and let it sell the rest to the people at cost price.

Of the agricultural report the extraordinary number of 220,000 copies have been ordered for last year alone, at a cost of \$180,000, or about eighty-five cents a copy. This cost is enough to pay the President, Vice-President, all the Cabinet officers, the Speaker of the House, and two-thirds of the first-class foreign ministers. In these reports there are 450,000 pounds of paper, or 225 tons, enough to take 225 double-horse wagons to pull them. Now, put these 225 tons into the mail bags, franked by Congressmen to corner grocers and gin-mill





proprietors, and you get some notion of the reason why the Post-Office Department was not self-sustaining.

One evil suggests and supports another. The swindles of the world are linked together, and the devil's forlorn expedients against the nation are "omnibussed."

At this very moment there are 800,000 copies of the reports for various years lying in the vaults of the Patent Office building, being the quantity annually printed in excess of the demands even of extravagance. These copies represent \$80,000 of the people's money invested in waste paper, mildewing, rotting, the spoil of paste-rats and truss makers. The new Commissioner of Patents, Mr. Foote, when he took his seat some time ago, was not aware of this decaying mass of agricultural knowledge, manuring the ground instead of the yeoman intellect. The Patent Office is self-supporting, but that is no reason why it should print more books than it wants. The bill for engraving plates of models for the Patent Office last year, was \$85,000. This is not mis-spent, but the excess of books was profligacy.

The usual number of copies printed of any public document is 1,550, or about the average circulation of books printed by private publishing houses. Out of this number more than one-half are bound up, the rest being distributed in sheets by gift, mail, or otherwise.

It is the current belief in Washington that the Patent Office department of the Government is not without corruption, but the agents and lawyers whose offices lie in its environs, and who are at the mercy of its examiners, are chary to speak, much of their bread and butter being bound up in the good-will of the directory. A partial awarding of patents, in the interest of money instead of merit, involves unjust millions of dollars, besides discouraging inventors, and making them doubt the righteousness of the Government. With a corrupt Patent Office, infinite law suits arise, and yet it is probable that money is freely used within the precincts of that building, the claims of inventors who are willing to pay being considered in many gross cases.





beyond those of the needy. So is there preference among the patent agents—those who solicit patents—some being understood to have the ears of the office at their disposal, others failing to secure patents which are afterwards willingly granted to cotemporaries. One of the oldest patent lawyers in the city said to me a few days ago :

“ The Patent Office has been more or less corrupt for fifteen years! Yes, twenty! When I used to be an anti-slavery man, in the years of Pierce and Buchanan, my clients were given to understand that they would be wise to apply for patents by some other agent. Recently, I have known the changing of the agent to get the patent promptly. The office ought to be thoroughly overhauled. It has become so that examiners expect to serve a brief term and go out rich.”

Mrs. Foote, the wife of the Commissioner, is an inventor, whose patents have been profitable. She has invented a skate without straps, and several other things.

Thaddeus Hyatt, once incarcerated in the District Jail for a complicity which he affected to have with John Brown's raid, is now a successful inventor, his patents for glass-lights in pavements netting him a very large income.

About fifty thousand patents have been issued in the United States in thirty years, the receipts for which in fees have been nearly two millions and a half of dollars, while the British Government has granted only about forty thousand patents in 250 years. This shows the extraordinary mental activity of the American mind in mechanics, and the Patent Office building, which has cost the government no money, is the best monument to American shrewdness and suggestiveness in the world. Amongst nearly a hundred thousand models stored in the splendid galleries of that institution, one may wander in hopeless bewilderment, feeling that every model, however small, is the work of some patient year, lifetime, and often of many lifetimes, so that the entire contribution, if achieved by one mind, would have extended far into a human conception of an eternity of labor.



The best patent lawyers in the United States are Judge Curtis and Mr. Whiting of Boston, Messrs. Gafford and Keller of New York, George Harding of Philadelphia, and Mr. Latrobe of Baltimore.

The most successful firm of patent agents is represented by the newspaper called the *Scientific American*, which began upwards of twenty-two years ago. One of its partners is one of the ancient enemies of Bennett, who classified them as "Old Moses Beach and those other sons of Beaches," proprietors of the New York *Sun*. The other partners are Munn and Wales. Their income is fifty thousand dollars a year to each partner, and they obtain one-third of all the patents issued, which are chiefly, however, what are classified as "cheap patents," on small and simple inventions. The *Scientific American* was started by an inventor, Rufus Porter, who sold out to the present owners. They refused to insert in it the cards of other patent agents, and it being the only paper of its class, the inventors at large transact their business through its proprietors. It was lately edited by Mr. McFarland, and under his management was altogether the best paper for inventors in the world. The Commissioners of Patents include some good names, chief of whom was Attorney General Holt, others being Ellsworth and Bishop of Connecticut, Burke of New Hampshire, Ewbank of New York, Hooper of Vermont, Mason of Iowa, and Theaker of Ohio.

The Patent Office building is generally adjudged to be the most imposing of all the national edifices of the Capital. To my mind the Post Office is a better adaptation. The former was the work of the present architect of the Capital, Edward Clark, and its three porticoes cost \$75,000 apiece. The four grand galleries, or model rooms, are unlike and magnificent. It is related here that inventors who spend many years among these models commonly go crazy.

These divers operations, possessing little affinity, are all to be transacted by one head. The Bureau of Pensions dispenses nearly nineteen millions of dollars a year; the Land Office gives





away from seven to ten millions of acres of land ; three hundred thousand Indians are dealt with by the Indian Bureau ; seventeen thousand patents are applied for to the Commissioner ; all the Pacific railways are superintended and subsidized ; the public buildings and property in the United States in the District of Columbia and all the territories are administered ; two millions of dollars are paid to the United States Courts : the whole of this immense and various business is transacted by one man. The Secretaryship of the Interior is therefore one of the very strongest positions in the government. So manifold became its duties that sometime ago the Agricultural Bureau was endowed with a special head, reporting directly to Congress, and moved out of the o'ercrowded Patent Office. Now the Indian Bureau demands to be also brought nearer to the executive head of the Government, or made independent, so that its Commissioner can have his legitimate influence with Congress. The Patent Office building is packed with Clerks, who also occupy the whole or parts of adjacent buildings, and it is demanded that a Department of the Interior be built on the Judiciary square, in the rear of the city hall, with the earnings of the Patent Office.



## CHAPTER XX.

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### CELEBRATED SCANDALS OF OUR TIME.

The war of the rebellion was attended with the demoralization usual to wars, and the extent of the disorder was proportionate to the area and cost of the war. A portion of the State legislatures had been corrupt for fifteen years prior to the rebellion. The corruptions in New York State and Pennsylvania had long attracted the serious consideration of patriotic people, and were ascribed to the patronage of the State works, railroads, canals, which being commonwealth enterprises, got to be the spoils of party. In Pennsylvania a coalition between private capitalists and reformers took the canals and railways out of the hands of the State, and there grew up in turn powerful corporate interests which were constantly breaking the law, and seeking new concessions. At the head of these was the great Pennsylvania Company which preferred to purchase legislation rather than to persuade it, because it was not the desire of this company that there should be any general discussion of railroad ethics. Such discussion might have resulted in enlarging the charities and educating the people in political economy to the extent of dangerous concessions to rival companies. The State of Pennsylvania, stretching across the Union from tide water to the lakes, was a perpetual barrier between the population of the interior, and the great sea-ports and manufacturing districts of the East; it was the policy of the Pennsylvania railroad from the day of its consolidation, to inculcate





a selfish policy amongst the citizens of the State, and hence the press and the legislature were subsidized almost from the outset. The corporations grew in time to be the waste of the Commonwealth, and the morals and intellect of the State were corrupted, while at the same time the natural advantages of Pennsylvania gave it a career of prosperity which was adroitly made to appear the result of the great monopoly.

New York State took another course; it has never surrendered the public works and canals, although many ardent reformers like Horace Greeley have argued that political morals would be improved at the State Capital by leaving these works to individuals, and getting rid of temptation. New York contains also two belt lines of rail across her territory, which have neutralized each other at the State Legislature. Thus corruption in the Empire State has thriven almost wholly upon the spoils of the metropolis, and in a less degree upon the canals.

The State of New Jersey received a different treatment from its great railroad corporations; the policy of the New Jersey railroad was neighborly, provincial, and accommodating. But corruption upon a wholesale plan was not indigenous there, but was imported from the two great States over the borders. It was not until the war was done that such scandals ensued, as the removal of the Erie Office from New York to Jersey City, and the extension of the Pennsylvania Railroad purchase and monopoly over the Jersey lines. It is necessary to instance these railways and public works as the first and general corruptors of the three great Middle States.

Under the old condition of things, when the State Legislature had final and general jurisdiction over matters of transportation, investment, barter, &c., there was an abiding temptation to under-reach the State Legislatures, and capitalists in New England and the populous towns of the East believed corruption to be a cheaper and surer way, than to wait for the enlightenment of public opinion. Hence a set of dexterous attorneys, solicitors, and lobby-men grew up around the State Capitols, ready to be hired to buy a bank charter, procure some





reduction of taxation, some enlarged power over debtors, or some act of incorporation which the narrow spirit of the Legislature would not accord, by merely frank and ingenuous entreaty.

It is to be observed that while the Federal Government took enlarged power during the contest, none of the central States of the Union grew a particle more tolerant. Pennsylvania and New Jersey were fastened closer in the embrace of one interest, while the great battle for liberalization went on throughout the South.

The influences which existed in a partially organized state at Boston, Albany, and Harrisburg, at the outbreak of the Rebellion, were speedily mustered at Washington City, and a simultaneous attack was made upon the virtue of every Department of the Government. Under the color of ridding the Departments of disloyal clerks, a wholly new set of officials, greatly enlarged as to numbers, were put in the public Departments, and in many cases the influences which secured the appointment, designed to use the clerk. The dimensions of the war and its suddenness, presented such a market for supplies, and gave so little time to bargain about rates or qualities, that every manufacturing producer and importer in the country was brought into intimate relations with the Government, and recognized a chance for instant riches, such as the previous history of the country had never permitted.

The currency of the country was at once enormously expanded, and the rate of duties raised higher than the most sanguine dreams of the Protection school. Thenceforward for four years, the interior history of legislation and administration presented a scene of selfishness hardly ever paralleled in Christian society, but concealed from the people by the splendor and heroism of the military movements and mechanical enterprises on the surface. Every department of business was enormously expanded; every municipality undertook a lavish system of local improvements; the frontier States and Territories developed a desperate class of land-grabbers and railway incorporators, who had formerly been sutlers or teamsters on the plains. And



of course such feverish conditions in society could not fail to put directly into Congress representatives of schemes, interests and mercantile apprehensions, instead of high-minded, individual, patriotic men.

The morals of the country in other respects had undergone deterioration. A sentimentality usurped the place of discreet and orthodox common-sense. So much had been said and sung about freedom in the abstract, that the women had got to ranting for a suffrage of their own, the workmen for a contract to which there should be but one side, the religious people for an etymological God in the Constitution, and the temperance people for a physical and compulsory diet of cold water. It very often happened that the sentimentalist and the thief took the same personality, and hence an enormous body of men have been developed by the war who will never forgive treason, and never stop robbing their country. There can be no doubt that the general happiness of the American citizen, has been enormously enhanced and equalized by the suppression of slavery, but it is time that the pæns over the great victory be hushed, in order that we may review our social and political condition, and separate the loyalist from the hypocrite, the unionist from the pirate.

There is no way in our country to change the direction of affairs except by public opinion expressed at the ballot box. But with politicians since the war, parties have lost their traditions and faded into each other. Nobody in power is interested to produce a change of things, neither that Democratic Congressman who is sure of his seat from some rutted constituency, nor that aspirant for greater honors in the Republican party, whose best hold is that he has already, and who may be worked up by the force of the organization to some pinnacle of honor he could never attain by himself. The issues presented by the people are far beyond the compass of such legislators as we have to direct them. Matters of wages, contracts, transportation, the reduction of corporations to decent behavior, the suppression of excesses by the majority, the matter of the currency and the tariff, none of these things can be dealt with dispassionately.







sionately and harmoniously, by a Congress of which the constituency and not the country is the unit. The entire administration of the Republic has come to be internal, and having no foreign policy, and there are no opportunities for the public mind to be segregated and directed toward a common object. Hence Congress has ceased to be a reasoning parliament, but is rather a market-house, where the desires and products of nearly three hundred Congressional districts are satisfied, exchanged, and sold. With such selfishness in the one ruling body of the country,—a selfishness not to be charged to the Congressman wholly, but to the interests of which he is the attorney, and which sent him to Washington—it is almost idle to make personal accusations, or select individual culprits for exposure.

Mr. Oakes Ames is typical of his constituency, and there is probably no manufacturer in it who would not have adopted his example, with the same chance and the same talents. Correlatively men like Ames who are making too good a thing of a national opportunity, will have vampires like James Brooks, runners like Jim Wilson, protégés like Colfax, and rivals like McComb. Something is wanted to give semblance, reality, manhood, and purpose to the general State, before we can have, in the large sense, *statesmen*. A market-house of constituencies, preying upon each other, comes far short of being a Government. Some such spasmodic uprising of the people, as was witnessed in 1861, is very inspiring to the eye and the mind, but if repeated with the same profligacy and dishonesty, and with the same following demoralization, the cost will be greater than the conquest.

Amongst the propositions which have been broached to bring order and policy out of Congress, is that of giving the heads of Departments the privileges of Congressmen. This proposition was seriously made by the Hon. George H. Pendleton, of Ohio, in 1861. It has been revived in our day by thinkers and writers in the public press and on the rostrum. It is contended that the heads of Departments, if required to appear in public de-



bate, would be men of increased stature, of enlarged responsibility, of a unified policy, and would give national direction and daily intelligibility to affairs, thus throwing into comparative retirement the capacity of the constituency which has lost association with the State government, and merely preys upon the general Treasury and the aggregate taxpayer.

It is certain that we must cease to hold the Congressman responsible for forgetting the dignity of his place, and the reputation of the country, when we merely thrust him forward as we do to pull our chestnuts out of the fire on the altar. During the war a vigorous minority in the Republican party gave a national policy to Congress, by resolving to carry the measures of emancipation and universal suffrage. Since the war there has been no policy, except to confirm these advantages. Hence a scramble for franchises, lands, subsidies, and points of tariff and taxation, has marked nearly the whole of our legislation since 1866. The lobbyist has come to be as legitimate and as much respected as the Congressman, for their missions are identical. Debate is regarded as superfluous, nearly the whole session is devoted to private bills, and matters affecting the constituency, and the general appropriation bills are crowded into a few days before adjournment. Congress does not feel qualified to punish anybody for bribery, nor to protect its own privileges, nor to find a verdict upon a criminal case squarely presented to it. The power of the National Constituency is confined to casting a vote once in four years for President and Vice-President, and very frequently the lateral issues are such that there can be scarcely a contest. Corruption appears to be prevalent, and to go high-handed. The capitalist casts his vote with nothing but his investment in his mind, and the laborer with nothing but his wages in view. There is a geographical nation and a party. A political nation, with well defined general objects, and the spirit of honest loyalty, one searches for in vain amidst the peculating departments and the heterogenous Congress at Washington. The greater issues of the country lie along the lines of highway,





and the United States cannot collect its own taxes from the railroad companies. Hence, although the war settled the question of a geographical Union and the basis of suffrage, it is without the power to correct internal evils or to command dignity.

Let us look at some instances of public morals, as we find them : First, observe how the Attorney-General was driven out of his place by a politician.

Judge Hoar probably lost his place through his independence, and his indisposition to be twitted by politicians. I will give you an instance of Hoar's way of offending these gentry :

Enter to Judge Hoar's office a long-haired, tawny, lathy Congressman, from the State of Sadducee. Congressman disposes himself for a grand Indian council, and is amazed to observe the fearless temerity of Judge Hoar, looking him through and through with those Presbyterian-blue eyes.

Lest I might give offense, I will say that Presbyterian-blue is a very sincere, honest, dauntless blue, and—what is of more consequence in an argument of this kind,—I am a Presbyterian myself.

"The Administration," says the long haired Sadducee, "ought to take care of its friends, and turn out its enemies. All successful Administrations take care of their enemies by being very malignant to them."

"May I ask," says Judge Hoar, in a voice which half answers its own question, "What you mean by the Administration?"

"I want to know," says the other, in the vernacular of a man taught to talk to a caucus, "who runs the President's machine?"

"What is the President's machine?" says the Presbyterian-blue eyes, with John Calvin and Theodore Beza both in them. "I cannot speak in that way. If you mean who takes care of the business of the Executive, General Grant and his Secretaries do *that*."





"Then," says the thickly-skinned Sadducee, "they ought to take care of their friends, and not put them out of office."

"I infer, from what you say of friendship," says the Attorney, "that it will come down directly to some one friend."

"The Administration ought to take the advice of its friends. It ought to confer with its friends. It ought not to do things to wound its friends without conferring with its friends."

"Oh!" says the Attorney blandly, "there are two friends in this case, you and the man you come to see about. Now, if advice would save this Administration, it is quite safe. I spend half my time every day hearing just such advice as you are giving me. Please be direct, and give your particular advice about this one friend, that I see we are coming to."

The Congressman, intensely irate, then tells about a man who has just been turned out of office, and another man put in his seat. The second man, of course, was not a friend of the Administration. The first man was. *He* was a constituent of Mr. Sadducee.

"I can tell you all about that case," said Judge Hoar, "The man turned out had been indicted for theft and found guilty. The Administration was, at that moment, a little select about its *friends*. Have you any further advice to give, Mr. —?"

Now, Judge Hoar has been fretted and pushed out of office by just such spiteful enemies as that Congressman.

Another flagrant case of crime against the dignity of the United States was that of John C. Fremont and the El Paso Railroad. This case, in a nutshell, is that of a private citizen taking the bonds of a railroad to France, and advertising them there as endorsed by the American Government.

May 17, 1869, there was laid upon the desks of the Pacific Railroad Committee a book with the following title: "The Trans-Continental, Memphis, El Paso and Pacific Railroad Company: How the Money was obtained in France under False Pretences, and How it was Squandered." This book contains the affidavit of Stephen Sarter, a stockholder in the city of Paris, but whom Fremont's attorneys allege to be a black-



mailer and a rogue—who charges that he bought of Fremont's company 148 first mortgage land-grant bonds, paying for the same \$116,430 in gold, which he afterward took back to the company, and demanded repayment, on the ground that they were worthless and sold under false pretences, but that the company "wholly refused" them. Sarter then proceeds to give the following account of Fremont's doings:

"In the same year, 1869, Emanuel Lissignol was the agent and advertising agent of the Executive Committee in Paris, and Frederic Probst its agent and banker. These, with Fremont, issued \$10,000,000 of first mortgage bonds in 1869, at \$1,000 each, with interest at 6 per cent., payable in gold, all secured by a mortgage on 8,000,000 acres of Texas land. All the bonds were sent to Paris, and a spacious office was opened at No. 51 Chaussee d'Antin."

"During the Summer of 1869, and between the months of April and September, these offices consisted of a suite of rooms fitted up and furnished in a costly and extravagant manner; one of the rooms in the suite was devoted to the storing and gratuitous distribution of a pamphlet and map, written and compiled by Lissignol. Between the months of June and September, 1869, the defendants, Fremont and Daniel, his engineer, were living in Paris, and they used said office as their own, and frequently, if not constantly, were there during business hours, and were conferring and in consultation with Probst and Lissignol, who were the managers of said offices, and constantly there during business hours of each day; all of which statements contained in this paragraph are within the personal knowledge of deponent."

Sarter's affidavit then goes on to say what the pamphlet of Lissignol alleged about Fremont's railroad property:

First. That the Memphis, El Paso, and Pacific Railroad Company, had purchased and was the owner of a line of railway extending from Memphis, Tenn., to Little Rock, Ark., and from Little Rock to Texarkana, on the eastern border of Texas, with full title, power and authority to and over the





railway, and all its property and franchises ; that said railway was then built and completely finished.

Second. That the Memphis, El Paso, and Pacific Railroad Company had purchased and was the owner of the railway extending from Memphis, *via* Knoxville, to Richmond and Norfolk, being 1,550 kilometres, or about one thousand miles in length.

Third. That the Congress of the United States had, in March, 1869, passed an act whereby the United States had guaranteed the payment of 6 per cent. interest on the construction bonds of the company to the amount of \$30,000 a mile, and also had guaranteed the repayment of the bonds by the company at their maturity, to wit: at the end of fifty years.

Fourth. That the company had a good, perfect, and absolute title to more than eight millions of acres of the most fertile lands in the State of Texas, by virtue of concession and grants from the Legislature of the State, with full power to mortgage the same, and that such lands were then worth, at the lowest price, not less than fourteen dollars an acre ; and that should these lands ever revert to the State of Texas, by reason of any failure of the company to fulfil its engagements, the mortgage by the company remained in full force and obligation, and was a valid lien on said lands in whatsoever hands the said lands might thereafter come.

Sarter also says, that a copy of the map issued is in his possession, and represents the lines of railway above mentioned, namely: the line of the alleged company from Texarkana to San Diego and San Francisco, from Memphis to Little Rock and Texarkana, and from Memphis to Richmond and Norfolk ; that the last two lines are laid down in unbroken red lines, with a marginal reference thereto, as follows, namely: "Railways belonging to the company, trans-Continental, Memphis, Pacific, and in running order." Sarter further says he has been informed by the officers of the company, and verily believes that the cost of printing and circulating the map and pamphlet, and of the advertisements in the



newspapers, was about one million of francs in gold, or about two hundred thousand dollars.

Sarter goes on to say that Fremont paid Probst \$200,000 for this very advertising, which was upon a style that Helmbold, Swain, Ayer, Bonner, or Phalon were excelled, frequently taking up a whole page of a paper like *L'Independence Belge* or the *Siecle*.

How the bonds got on the French Stock Exchange. Baron G. Boileau, Fremont's brother-in-law, had been French Consul General in New York, and it is alleged that he received his \$150,000 for testifying to the French Minister of Finance that Fremont's road was what it was represented to be. To spur up this minister, and persuade him to permit the Fremont bonds to quotation upon the French Stock Exchange, it was held out that Koechlin & Co., and other French builders and rail-makers, were ready to take the bonds for engines and iron. Probst, the broker, wrote thus shrewdly :

"A prompt solution to my application (to put the bonds on the market) is urgent, because if the French contracts should be forfeited, the instructions of the company would compel me to make new contracts in Germany. All my past efforts to induce the Americans to take their supplies on the French iron market would become useless, and I doubt that, after so notorious a failure, other American companies would not be disposed to give their orders for materials in France.

"Your Excellency will, probably, understand how important it is for the French metallurgy not to miss the single occasion that, up to this time, has offered to our iron the United States market. I am confident that you will grant me your good-will out of regard for a so considerable national interest."

It has since been ascertained, says Sarter, that neither Koechlin & Co., nor any other manufacturer, had agreed to take bonds in payment, and nothing but sham contracts had been submitted to the French Minister.

Sarter further says of the iron ordered in Europe, that about 4,000 tons have arrived in New Orleans, and have been





attached by the creditors of the Memphis and El Paso Company. None of the engines have been shipped to this country.

The offices of the company in New York were closed under pretext of their removal to Washington, where they cannot be found, and where the officers of the company do not reside.

For this flagrant abuse of its dignity, and the bringing of its credit into contempt in foreign money markets, the United States Government never took action of any sort against Fremont and his confederates. On the contrary, Fremont endeavored to have the American Minister at Paris removed for certifying in aid of a French journalist whom the confederates had sued for libel that the United States had never guaranteed the bonds of the road. Senator Howard of Michigan made a series of attacks upon Fremont in the Senate, and it was alleged that he ceased only when he had been "seen" by the attorneys of the road. The French Government was no respecter of persons, and in the Spring of 1873 it condemned Fremont, his brother-in-law the Baron Bolleau, and the brokers in the transaction to terms of imprisonment at hard labor. Fremont kept out of France, and is still at large. The rolling stock and iron he had purchased were seized for debt at New Orleans, and finally the road fell into the hands of Tom Scott, while the poor French people who had invested in the fraudulent bonds to the amount of millions, lost their money, and with it respect for the American credit. The same performance has been repeated by other railway speculators, none of whom have been in any manner molested by the United States courts.

Another scandal of an atrocious character happened at the opening of the Vienna Exhibition in the year 1873. Congress voted \$200,000 to arrange the American Department of the exhibition, and forward the contributions from American producers and manufacturers. A large number of honorary commissioners were named by the President, but before the exhibition opened it was discovered that several of these had purchased their places: some for the honor of an official position, and others to peculate, blackmail, and rob the inventors. Our Minister at Vienna, and our Commissioner-in-Chief, got





into a quarrel, and the whole list was suspended by telegraph, to the scandal of civilization.

One of the roads above referred to, whose bonds had been thrown out of the foreign markets, is that leading from Northern California to the Columbia River, of which the presiding genius is Ben. Holliday, formerly a trader and teamster between Missouri and Salt Lake. Whatever his credit might have been in the European markets, it was sufficient for a very respectable class of Congressmen.

At a dinner at Welcker's, given about that time, Holliday celebrated himself. After they had all drunk Ben's liquor and eaten his terrapin, Rescoe Conkling arose, glass in hand, and said that he had a great responsibility to fulfil: that he drank to the noble man who had built railroads and run vessels on the Pacific Coast, whom New York claimed as one of her splendid productions. After Conkling came Kelley, the great heavy Senator from Oregon, who said the State of Oregon would not permit New York to claim such a magnificent production as Holliday, but that he was all Oregonian, and heard no sound save his own dashing. Next came Beck of Kentucky, who said that New York and Oregon should not take from grand old Kentucky the ownership of Ben. Holliday, for there he was born, and belonged in honor,—all this miserable toadyism over a speculator who was in Washington City giving dinners to get a subsidy for his imperiled railroad, and who had no conception of the private rights of anybody standing in his way, but would eat up individuals, corporations, and legislatures!

No case before the Departments and Congress has made more discussion than that of the lease of the Alaska Fur-Seal Islands. About 1869, an association of young gentlemen obtained from the Government, under the provision of an act of Congress passed in their favor, the right to take all the seals, up to a certain limitation, from the islands of St. George and St. Paul,—paying so much per annum for the lease. The most prominent person in this company is General Miller, who lost



an eye in one of Grant's campaigns, and was afterward Collector of the Port of San Francisco. The Eastern agent is a Mr. Hutchinson, one of the singing family of Hutchinson Brothers of New England, and a shrewd, amiable, and dexterous lawyer and *negoeiante*. I am told that when General Rousseau was sent up to Sitka and the Russian waters, to take possession of whatever he found there, after the Russian evacuation, he gave the hint to some of his friends, who quietly repaired overland, by different routes, met him at San Francisco, and arrived at Sitka with the money in hand to make purchases. Hutchinson, for the firm of Cole, Miller, Hutchinson & Co., instantly concluded a bargain for the store-houses, seal-gear, and sent vessels which constituted a part of the franchise of the Russian American Company; and, with this purchase, there fell to him, besides, some sort of an unexpired lease of the fur-seal islands themselves. Now, on the same expedition, certain San Francisco capitalists had ensconced themselves, chief of whom were the proprietors of the ice-monopoly of San Francisco—the ice used at that time on our Pacific Coast coming exclusively from one spot in Russian America. As the ice people and their camp-followers were generally Hebrews, and disposed to look twice at their money, before they spent it, they lost the only object worth acquiring there—possession of the fur-seal franchises and equipments. Of course, two lobbies were instantly formed—the Ins and the Outs—and agents were sent to Washington, who deputed themselves as agents generally do here, acting up to their prettiest.

It was soon apparent that Hutchinson had more genius than his opponents, in diplomacy as well as business; and, although Secretary Boutwell, acting from that peculiar original obstinacy for which he is noted, cast his influence against the Miller and Hutchinson crowd, yet Congress, after investigation in committee, unhesitatingly confirmed the original patentees. Under the terms of this act, Mr. Boutwell was compelled to give a lease to Miller & Co., which he did with a very bad grace. You know very well how those squabbles over spoils are conducted.





Anonymous letters are written to newspapers and reviews; lawyers get in with organs of influence and public men; pamphlets are put forth, full of affidavits from people far off as Kamschatka; and, if the sorehead party do not succeed in ousting their opponents, they generally expect to be bought over in order to have the quarrel stopped. Does not this case, and the utter impossibility of computing the right or wrong of it, show that the National Congress, meeting on the slope of the Atlantic Ocean, is undertaking to do too much when it either gives out or rescinds contracts to this or that party for distant monopolies, which can never be quite understood away from the place of their location?

The case of McGarrahan *vice* Gomez, for the New Idria quicksilver mine, is a notable instance of audacity, stock and the burning of fire crackers as elements of notability at Washington. The printed reports, briefs, locums and confabs on this case make a formidable literature.

The New Idria mine is situated about 160 miles from San Francisco, and is one of half a dozen or more mines of cinnabar in America, and second in product only to the New Almaden mine, which was also the subject of prolonged litigation. In 1851 a party of mining pioneers seeking silver in the mountains, three thousand feet above the sea, discovered cinnabar, and proceeded in a small way to develop it. After a few years some merchants and men of small means organized with them a stock company for the purpose of more methodical and extensive mining, and the mine and company took the name of Idria from an older mine of cinnabar in Austria. Long prior to this time the purchase and manufacture of Mesilan claims had become a profitable and seductive business, and the formation of the new company appears to have inspired an unusually large transaction of this description. In February and May, 1838, people appeared around and about the mine professing to look for what they named The Panoche Grande grant. This was represented to be a tract of land granted to one Gomez in the year 1844, by a Mexican Governor of Upper California, and



by him transferred for the sum of \$1,100 to William McGarrahan, in the winter of 1857, at a period suspiciously close to the stocking of the mine.

Under Gomez, this alleged grant had run a long and crooked career of litigation. The Commission to determine Mexican land grants had rejected it in 1855, but the attorney of Gomez got the appointment of U. S. District Attorney and bought half the claim for *one dollar*, had the case brought before the court of a distant district on appeal and there passed. By two decrees the area was fixed at three and afterward at four leagues. Gomez, having a bad character as a forger and perjurer, was got rid of, and the District Attorney and McGarrahan became the only claimants. Fearing the fraud in the District Court would undo them, a crafty appeal was made to the United States Supreme Court, and the record of its dismissal smuggled into the court records. The U. S. District Attorney, working on the inside, expected to make this an easy matter, but his complicity and the interpolation were discovered. The future Secretary Stanton, as special law agent for the United States, appeared in California at this juncture and exposed Gomez's connection with the Zimantown and other frauds, and in 1861, Judge Ogier vacated the decree of confirmation obtained by the conspirators, on the ground that they had "deceived the Court and the U. S. Attorney had obtained a decree in his own favor under false pretences." However, as Judge Ogier died directly, his successor,—who said at the time, "a grosser case of fraud has rarely been presented,"—was led to invalidate Ogier's decree on the ground of defective jurisdiction. The same Judge permitted an appeal, and the Attorney General of President Lincoln insisted upon it, whereupon the redoubtable McGarrahan brought suit in a circuit court for an injunction to restrain the officers from getting a transcript of the previous flagitious history of the case. When the transcript was got after long delay, McGarrahan did not proceed to contest the appeal on its merits, but moved to dismiss it because five years had elapsed since the fraudulent decree was obtained in his





favor. This dodge was ruled *out* and the Supreme Court of the United States then formally reversed the decree obtained by Ord and directed the inferior court to dismiss McGarrahan's petition.

Apprehending the result, McGarrahan, with the shrewdest counsel he could retain, and abetted by some men of means who operated upon Congressmen and Senators, labored before the Department of the Interior to anticipate the Supreme Court with a patent for the land where the mine was situated. He had thrown his claim into a stock company of five millions of dollars as early as 1861, in the city of New York, and somewhat later when beaten before the court and lobbying before Congress, he increased the capital to ten millions. Yet he was all the time offering the Secretary of the Interior \$22,000 only for the same property, as he supposed, locating it in the rugged mountains as agricultural land. His success was but partial, although the sinister proceedings in the courts below embarrassed the judgment of Secretaries Smith and Usher successively, and the celebrated Daniel E. Sickles who afterward did some work of the same kind against the Erie railroad company, sought to persuade a patent out of Mr. Lincoln. The patent was never obtained. The Supreme Court stood fast. And the lapse of time, which McGarrahan had sought to use as his advocate, had also befriended the miners who were in possession of the property. Congress had meanwhile extended the pre-emption laws of the United States over mineral lands, and the money of the New Idria Company, deposited for the past five years (1873) in the Treasury of the United States and received as pre-emption money by the receiver, is a part of the perfection of a title already well established by twenty years of productive enterprise and habitation.

It was also unfortunate for McGarrahan, of whom we can scarcely speak as an individual, so Protean has been his character, that the grant of agricultural land under which he claimed was found on survey not to include the coveted mine, and a second survey with the points set up to accomplish this purpose failed





again to "float" the claim far enough. Notwithstanding this accumulation of misfortunes, it is the boast of the abiding genius who embalms this romance in himself that he still lives. As his lawyers express it, with a look calculated to exact admiration, "he hangs on." But so do a good many other characters around Washington whom we have described in this book, whose limits will not permit us, even if the subject were worth the space, to speak further of this generic case. Mr. McGarrahan is an Irishman of great combativeness, and as long as he can get a lawyer he will keep some notoriety. He has had several suits in the local courts of Washington, twice suing editors who published adverse briefs and once actually seeking to compel the Government to give him a patent by a mandamus. The estimable Secretary of the Interior, Honorable Jacob I. Cox, was worried out of his office by this Mr. McGarrahan's counsel. In our day the McGarrahan case excites a laugh when it comes up, as a synonym of a legal itch, incurable, not dangerous, but abiding and annoying.

The power of this claim has lain almost uniformly in the allurements it gives attorneys who are promised large contingent fees, and in the extensiveness of the stock based upon its triumph, shares of which were shown before the Judiciary Committee.

What can fight stock? Stock, which represents nothing possessed, but which is yet the corrupter and deceiver of its recipient? Stock, of which the limit in such cases is illimitable; because, if the case fails, the stock is worth nothing, and if it gains the stock is repudiated. It is stock which feeds corruption and prolongs litigation in places like Washington.

We present below a copy of a share of stock in McGarrahan's enterprise; it represents a mine of which he has never had possession.



No. 104.

Incorporated under the Laws of the  
State of New York.

50 Shares.

PANOCHÉ GRANDE QUICKSILVER MINING COMPANY,  
(OF CALIFORNIA.)

Stamp.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY, That William McGarahan is entitled to fifty shares in the Capital Stock of the Panoche Grande Quicksilver Mining Company, transferable in person or by attorney on the books of the said company, at its office in the city of New York on surrender of this certificate.

WITNESS the Seal of the Company, and the Signatures of the President and Secretary, this 21st day of May, 1868.

FREDERICK FRANK, Secretary.

B. O'CONNOR, President.

For Value Received, I hereby assign and transfer unto \_\_\_\_\_ shares of the within stock, and authorize \_\_\_\_\_ to transfer the same on the books of the company on surrender of this certificate.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 18\_\_\_\_.

It will be observed that the above certificate of stock is not signed nor endorsed, and therefore it would possess no value to any one verdant enough to accept it in lieu of services. The question occurs: Why was the first five millions of stock expanded to ten millions unless with the intent to put out the second batch of stock in Congress after the claim had been taken there and for the first time a plea of equities set up. The Honorable Jeremiah Black expressed his opinion of this case in his testimony before the Judiciary Committee, March 25th, 1870. He said:

"Perhaps this case has some features in it more extraordinary than any of the others. It is not singular in being founded upon a forgery, but the decree of the District Court was obtained by a fraud more gross than the original fabrication of the title, and the object of the claimants was very near being consummated by an imposture on the Supreme Court more atrocious than either."

Two senators, Honorable O. S. Ferry of Connecticut and Honorable George H. Williams of Oregon, the latter Attorney General of the United States, at a subsequent day concluded their report on the subject of McGarahan's claim in the following words:





"Dependent upon the passage of the bill before the Senate is a prize of more than half a million of dollars. Politicians, lawyers, and editors have taken large shares in the lottery; the professional lobby, both male and female, have been marshaled, and behind and around McGarrahan is a crowd impatient of delay and hungry for the spoils of victory.

The undersigned submit their report with the utmost confidence that the Senate will resist this pressure; that it will uphold the law as it has been settled by the uniform decision of the Supreme Court for nearly twenty years; that it will protect the title to hundreds of millions of property threatened by this bill, and that it will decide now for all time that speculators in Mexican land titles, defeated in the courts of justice, will find no favor for their swindling schemes in the halls of legislation."



## CHAPTER XXI.

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### THE CRIMES AND FOLLIES OF OUR PUBLIC LIFE.

"Come to my office," said Mr. Burton C. Cook, M. C., one day, "and I will show you what I am following up."

In the second story, and rear part of the house, the lighted gas reflectors showed tables strewn with reports and papers, yet methodized by a legal hand and ready for reference. Taking up a thick book of perhaps eight hundred pages, made of bound documents, and endorsed,

"Land Claims—New Mexico," the Congressman said:

"Here you will find a list of New Mexican Claims. There are nineteen of them reported here. The most audacious one is the Beaubien and Miranda claim, which is interpreted by its attorneys and owners to enclose 450 square leagues of land, or between two millions and three millions of acres."

I opened my eyes.

"What pretext can such a claim have to set up? It is a State of itself."

"It is a principality," said Mr. Cook; "each of these nineteen cases is a principality. I will show you how they came to be."

"Before New Mexico came into the possession of the United States, the Mexican Government enacted a land law, an extensive homestead bill, in character,—which was intended to promote emigration to its uninhabited provinces. This law gave eleven square leagues of land to certain few persons, to encour-



age them to settle upon the soil with companies of people. Generally, some provision or promise was exacted from the grantee, and, as the whole region was unsurveyed, the limits of the grant were to be ascertained, and fixed by natural landmarks. I will show you, in a moment, how unreliably and carelessly the routes and the points of connection of these boundaries were placed. By the treaty called Gaudaloupe-Hidalgo, which conveyed to us the region of New Mexico, we were bound to carry out the stipulations of the Mexican Government as to these grants, and they are to be confirmed by direct act of Congress, of course, and then the Secretary of the Interior issues a patent for them. Ever since that treaty, our Government, in all its parts, has been pestered and absorbed with these vague and vastly interpreted grants. My bill, founded in equity and the treaty alike, proposes to enact that, unless the contrary is directly specified in the original grant, each of these grants shall be interpreted to mean eleven square leagues and no more, according to the Mexican law under which they all arose."

"Is there anybody of modesty sufficient to demand more than that?"

"Why, as I have told you, each of these claims has been stretched to a principality. The Beaubean claim wants 450 square leagues. The suggestion of this bill of mine has raised a howl from all these claimants. Some of them, I suppose, have erected their patents into stock companies, and by the united vehemence of their stockholders propose to be satisfied with nothing less than the wildest construction of their grants."

"This, Mr. Cook," said I, "is worse than the railroad land grants."

"Why, yes! The railroad leaves us every alternate section. It raises the value of the common domain of the country. But these grants take everything. They spoil the settlement of a region, put in the power of a few to overrule the many in the courts of justice and in Congress, and immigration is discouraged before them."





"I have heard," said I, "that a certain Judge Watts, who was the first Delegate to Congress from New Mexico, and who has made a princely fortune out of these claims, is now the Attorney-General here for the whole of them."

"That," replied the reticent man, "I cannot speak about. But let us look at some of these claims. Here is the Beaubean-Miranda claim, professing to have been granted by Governor Manuel Armijo, in 1841, to a Canadian and a Mexican, and approved, after some litigation, by the New Mexican Assembly in 1844. It was confirmed by the New Mexican Surveyor-General in 1857, and by Congress of the same year, Judah P. Benjamin, if I mistake not, reporting the bill.

"In one of Benjamin's reports, he refers to the Vihil claim—another one—and showing that the latter is interpreted to mean 100 square leagues of land, his committee says: This is too extravagant for belief. Yet the Beaubean-Miranda claim, which the committee reported favorably upon in the same breath, is actually here demanding 450 square leagues! It is plain, you see, that the committee supposed the Beaubean claim was to be eleven square leagues, according to the Mexican law."

"Now let us see the language of Beaubean and Miranda petitioning for this grant: 'A grant of land in the now county of Taos, commencing below the junction of the Rayado and Red River.' Mark you! nothing is said as to how far below the junction. 'From thence in a direct line to the east to the first hills, from thence, following' the course of Red River, in a northerly direction, to the junction of the Una de Gato with Red River, from whence, following along said hills to the east of the Una de Gato River, to the summit of the table land, from whence, turning northwest, following said summit, to the summit of the mountain which separates the waters of rivers which run toward the east from those which run to the west; from thence, following the summit of said mountain in a southerly direction, to the first hill of the Rayado River; from thence, following along the line of said hill, to the place of be-



ginning.' Now, you will observe that this indefinite description has a high degree of elasticity if one end is pulled by a sharp fellow. In one of the papers accompanying this grant is an admission that it does not embrace more than fifteen or eighteen leagues. Now, it amounts up to between two millions and three millions of acres. You can readily see how this is accomplished. The original patentee takes his eleven leagues legitimately belonging to him, and, after a while, observing a fine piece of pasture land or running brook half a mile beyond, he pulls up his stake and carries it forward. After a while he discovers another nice tract, and seizes it, and finally his eleven square leagues means anything. On May 29, 1858, Mr. Sandidge reported for the Committee of Private Land Claims, that there was an unknown quantity of land claimed by most of the parties. Says this gentleman in his brief report:

'A survey of the lands, it is presumed, will not be ordered by Congress in advance of a recognition of title.'

Of the fourteen claims proposed to be confirmed by this bill, the area of but five of them is either stated or estimated. They are for one league, four leagues, five leagues, seven thousand six hundred acres; and about twenty thousand acres.

Whether the other claims embrace a less or greater amount is not and cannot be made known from the documentary evidence of title forwarded by the Surveyor-General.

The grant, in each case, refers to some stream, hill, mountain-top, valley, or other known natural object, for boundary."

"If you will take this book home," concluded Mr. Cook, "and examine it, you will see by what loose beginnings, shrewd interpretations, and pregnant collusions between surveyors and grantees these old inherited claims have come to be afflictions and deadly parasites. They threaten to absorb all the valuable lands in our Southwestern Territories, to plague the people with litigation and monopoly, and perhaps, to work corruption in the Federal Legislature. My bill proposes merely to carry out the provisions of the Mexican law—to limit each of these





claims to eleven square leagues, and throw the rest into the public domain for the benefit of the small settler and the genuine immigrant."

I carried the book home, and proceeded to wade through its half-breed documents—loose, vagarious, sprinkled over with Spanish Republican interjections of: "I swear that I do not act in malice," "God preserve the Republic," "Nibs and liberty," and, after observing here the Martinez claim, there the Valle, yonder the Scolly, near by the Tecolate, and so forth, and so forth, sleepily, I wondered in what freak of time a Mexican was made, and by what unfortunate collusion a Yankee ran against him, in order that by the design of the one and the stupidity of the other, posterity might go waiting, and Congress be resolved to a land office.

Amongst the pleasantries of Kansas politics is the Black Bob land claim, which led to a wrangle between the Senate side of the national representation of the Commonwealth, and the House side. It seems that a band of Shawnee Indians, headed by one Black Bob, their Chief, received, in 1854, thirty-five thousand acres of land in Johnson County, Southeastern Kansas; or, in other words, about two hundred acres to each man in the tribe. The treaty giving the lands specified that they should be held in common by the band, but that if any one Indian wanted to take his land in severalty he might do so, and obtain a patent from the Indian Commissioner at Washington. Now, during the war, Quantrell's rebel band drove the Black Bobs out of their reservation, and scattered them over the Indian Country. It was then revealed to certain Kansas politicians and speculators, that they might take advantage of the severalty clause in the treaty afore-named; and, accordingly, when the Black Bobs returned, after the war, they found the most available portion of the reservation—the rich, the well-watered, the heavily-timbered tracts—detached from the country, and this detachment had been effected by manipulating the Indian Bureau in the city of Washington. Sixty-nine Indians were represented to have forwarded requests for separate



patents, and these patents were obtained by a Congressman and quietly forwarded to the city of Lawrence, where they were secretly kept eleven months in the vaults of the First National Bank there; the few Indians of the sixty-nine who really remained alive, knowing nothing about the matter. Of course, during these eleven months the speculators and politicians who had secured the land patents, were negotiating with the Indians, to the disadvantage of the latter, so that if they should consent to a sale, the concealed patent would be ready to be brought forward in the nick of time, in the closing up of the bargain. But this was not the worst. About twelve hundred unsuspecting immigrants had meantime been deluded into the belief, that if they would occupy the deserted Black Bob Reservation, and make improvements thereon, they should have the right of pre-emption and subsequent purchase. These settlers made a quarter of million improvements upon the Black Bob lands, and now they are informed that their titles are defective, while the Indians on the other hand, find their country slipping up under their feet.

A set of claims before Congress to which reference has been already made dates back eighty years.

The French claims, so called, were for vessels and cargoes seized by the French between 1793 and 1800. The French never explicitly recognized these claims, except to offset them with others; but, by the treaty under which France sold Louisiana, she abated 20,000,000 francs of the purchase money, (or \$4,000,000), to adjust and pay claims for captures, supplies, and embargoes, by which American citizens were sufferers.

A host of claimants at once appealed to Congress. In 1802 and 1807, a Committee of Congress reported favorably to paying them. In 1835, the Senate passed a bill giving \$5,000,000 to such claimants; but the House defeated it. They continued to importune the two Houses even down to the breaking out of the Rebellion; loafers, and vagabonds, and listless sons of men grew up expectant on these claims. Insurers, assignees, jobbers and agents, strained their wits and ran off their legs about





them. But Benton showed that, during the period in question, men made fortunes if they saved one ship in four or five from the French cruizers; and the same can be shown to have been the case during the Rebellion, when transports commanded enormous hire, and our great shippers forsook the sea voluntarily to take army contracts, and manufacture and sell supplies. Imagine Vanderbilt, the King of the Sea, losing anything by the war, or any ship-builder who built a monitor, or any importer, or any sea captain.

As to insurance claims, here is a pithy extract from Benton's speech:

"One of the most revolting features of this bill is its relation to the insurers. The most infamous and odious act ever passed by Congress was the Certificate-Funding Act of 1793,—an act passed in favor of a crowd of speculators; but the principle of this bill is more odious than even it. I mean that of paying insurers for their losses. The United States, sir, insure! Can anything be conceived more revolting and atrocious than to divert the funds of the Treasury to such iniquitous uses? It would be far more just and equitable if Congress were to insure the farmers and planters, and pay them their losses on the failure of the cotton crop; they, sir, are more entitled to put forth such claims than speculators and gamblers, whose trade and business is to make money by losses."

Said Benton, "There ought to be some limit to these presentations of the same claim. It is a game at which the government has no chance. Claims become stronger upon age,—gain double strength upon time,—too often directly by newly-discovered evidence,—always indirectly by the loss of adversary evidence, and by the death of contemporaries."

"Two remedies are in the hands of Congress: one to break up claim-agencies, by allowing no claim to be paid to an agent; the other, to break up speculating assignments, by allowing no more to be received by an assignee than he has actually paid for the claims."

"Assignees and agents are now the great presenters of claims





against the government. They constitute a profession, a new one,—resident at Washington City. Skillful and persevering, acting on system and in phalanx, they are entirely an overmatch for the succession of new members, who come ignorantly to the consideration of the cases which they have so well dressed up.”

“It would be to the honor of Congress and the protection of the Treasury, to institute a searching examination into the practices of these agents, to see whether any undue means are used to procure the legislation they desire.”

Mr. Benton did not then know that the time would come when the President's brother-in-law would become a claim agent in Washington, and Congressmen and Heads of Departments as well.

Reading an old copy of Basil Hall's travels in the United States, during Jackson's administration, in a book which excited the wildest expressions of outrage at the time amongst our papers, I came to this curious account of how tender they were in appropriating money a third of a century ago.

“One of the first debates,” says Hall, who was an aristocratic British officer, “at which I was present, related to a pecuniary claim of the late President Monroe, of the United States, amounting, if I remember rightly, to \$60,000. This claim had long been urged, and been repeatedly referred to Committees of the House of Representatives, who, after a careful investigation of the subject, had reported in favor of its justice. The question at length came on for discussion, ‘Is the debt claimed by Mr. Monroe from the United States, a just debt or not?’ Nothing could possibly be more simple. There was a plain matter of debtor and creditor, a problem of figures, the solution of which must rest on a patient examination of accounts, and charges, and balances. It was a question after the heart of Joseph Hume,—a bone of which that most useful legislator understands so well how to get at the marrow. Well, how was this dry question treated in the House of Representatives? Why, as follows: little or nothing was said as to the intrinsic justice or validity of the claim. Committees of the House had



repeatedly reported in its favor, and I heard no attempt, by fact or inference, to prove the fallacy of their decision. But a great deal was said about the political character of Mr. Monroe, some dozen years before, and a great deal about Virginia, and its Presidents, and its members, and its attempts to govern the Union, and its selfish policy. A vehement discussion followed as to whether Mr. Monroe or Chancellor Livingstone, had been the efficient agent in procuring the cession of Louisiana. Members waxed warm in attack and recrimination, and a fiery gentleman from Virginia was repeatedly called to order by the Speaker. One member declared that, disapproving altogether of the former policy of Mr. Monroe's Cabinet, he should certainly now oppose his demand for payment of a debt of which it was not attempted to prove the injustice. Another thought Mr. Monroe would be very well off if he got half of what he claimed, and moved an amendment to that effect, which, being considered a kind of compromise, I believe, was at length carried, after repeated adjournments, and much clamorous debate.

The City of Washington is full of hopes, of claims, of lingers. Heavens! what a word has that word "CLAIM" become to me since I have dwelt in Washington! A word full of dreams and jewels, acres of silks, long, luxurious voyages in foreign lands, and daughters married to perpetual intellect. And yet a word tied down to an unpaid tavern bill, the misery of begging a loan, the waiting for a draft, the croon of a shrill landlady, sending up her account, the ever half-dread of a crushed assurance and a vision dispelled which alone makes life endurable! This is the word Claim—a word between the Christian's immortal hope and the beggar's terrible plea.

I remember once seeing a man with a wild eye. He was dressed like a banker. Somebody cried to him: "They have passed your claim?"

"No, they have just beat me by five votes!"

He showed a set of white teeth, laughing, but his eye was full of drunkenness. I looked into its laugh and shuddered. It was the laugh of a son who cries to his father, "Leave your





house forever ? Yes. With pleasure and forever !” Recklessness and despair, smile of outer darkness ; the hope of that smile is tumbling through worlds of space, like Satan,

Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky.

This man, however, happened to be the celebrated Blanton Duncan, author of the subsequent Louisville Convention. He plunged into politics and got what he wanted.

Amongst the claims against the Pension Office, after the close of the war, was one of a fraudulent nature, for which the Congressman who presented it was convicted before the criminal court of Washington ; Stokes, of Tennessee, long a member of Congress, and the Radical candidate for Governor of Tennessee against Lenter. Senator Brownlow came out against Stokes, and was denounced for it as abetting a bolter’s ticket.

Stokes is one of the ordinary run of political creatures—nearly an old man, bald, wire-pulling, worn down with the moral yielding of no original nature. Such men escape from society into the boozing-kens of politics, and descend from the Capital to the Court of Justice, like the bad Moslem from the Bridge of Paradise to Eblis. The details of this case, particularly in the published correspondence of Stokes himself, are the vindication of the plainest revelations of newspaper correspondence from this city. Here are some passages written by this man to his friend, who has turned State’s evidence :

All I want is to get out of Congress, and I can get up the largest claim business ever done. If you fool me I am ruined. The letters are coming from all quarters for claims ; we can make \$500,000 within two years, if you will stand by me, and take my advice. Keep back the news from all who will not sell their claims ; let no one see the amount of certificates. The whole liability for the false swearing is on the men and officers.

In brief, Stokes obtained claims for a large amount of money from a fictitious military organization, and, while a member of Congress, used their perjured affidavits to press the case ; and,



when the matter was about to pass the Department, he and his confederate sought, while solely possessed of the secret, to purchase the false claims.

A case that showed the virtue of the worst class of carpet-bagging members of Congress came up before the Military Committee in 1869, on the suggestion of General Slocum, of New York. It referred to certain advertisements, and newspaper and private charges, tending to prove that cadetships, both at Annapolis and West Point, are openly offered for sale and disposed of to the highest bidder. Congress did itself credit by unanimously and promptly ordering an investigation of the subject, and unless I am mistaken, the Committee of Military Affairs has the material in it to probe the subject to the bottom. John A. Logan, who cares for nobody, is the chairman of the committee, and some soldiers upon it are Cobb, of Wisconsin, the cool colonel of the splendid Fifth Infantry of that State,—in whose camp I have passed many cheerful hours on the hills of the Chickahominy,—Negley, of Pittsburgh, Slocum, who was both a West Pointer and a Major-General, and Stoughton, Packard, Asper, Witcher, and Morgan, all good officers. I am told that this is the opinion of some members of the committee, based upon the appended data :

An advertisement appeared in the New York Times some short time before, offering to dispose of a cadetship to persons of means. Just prior to that time, a Western Pennsylvanian paper gave the names of two or three persons who had been addressed by parties here, offering to place their sons in the army or navy. Judge Woodward, of Wilkesbarre, Pa., knew a lady who received a like notification. A General (whether of militia or volunteers, not expressed) in Connecticut, is said to have a son now at one of the Academies for whose appointment he paid two thousand dollars. There are other cases lying behind these, if the reports have any foundation, but they will probably be difficult to trace out, because the father or the son who purchases a place at West Point, will be as sensitive





to exposure as the Congressman taking his perquisites to the shamble.

A Republican Senator, speaking to me on this matter, said : " There are a number of men representing the Southern States, who have come in under the reconstruction acts, and they are totally irresponsible, because they know that they will never come back here again. Therefore they go in for a trade on every measure, and are ready, if necessary, to face humiliation and exposure."

The effect of the cadetship exposure was to expel a carpet-bagger from South Carolina, by the name of Whittemore, to compel the resignation of Golladay, of Tennessee, and to implicate Pettis, of Pennsylvania, Sypher, of Louisiana, and several others.

About the same time, a member of Congress, by the name of Bowen, of South Carolina, was tried for two separate acts of bigamy, and on one convicted, and sent to the penitentiary. President Grant pardoned him, and he returned to South Carolina, to be elected to the State Legislature, and afterward to the Sherifffalty of Charleston.

Bowen, the alleged bigamist, married a sprightly, semi-political lady, bearing the aristocratic name of Pettigrew King. This dashing widow of the middle age, has long figured in this city as a sort of well-preserved belle. Bowen is a native of Rhode Island, fond of female society, and it is supposed that having a divorce under way from the first Mrs. Bowen, he was unable to resist the impulse of a more congenial matrimonial partnership, and somewhat anticipated the action of the divorce court. This little indifference to the precise time of things constituted all the difference between respectability and bigamy. There is the usual complaint on Mr. Bowen's part that he is the victim of persecution. Heaven knows that there is too much hounding of folks under this Government, and that the worst adversary one can make is a rival for honors. The most dishonorable road to tread now-a-days is the road to





honor. Along that road lies such a vista as the late Robert T. Conrad made his hero, Aylmere, see :

Ambition struggles with a sea of hate ;  
He who sweats up the ridgy grade of life  
Finds at each station icy scorn above,  
Below him hooting envy.

A formidable interest in this country is the gambling interest. The telegraph will wink in a moment any probable news to Wall street, and if Boutwell ever does resign, probably fifty men will know it before he, himself, receives the assurance. At his elbow—perhaps at the President's elbow—Wall street keeps its man, and should the President frown but once when Boutwell's name is mentioned, it will be felt in Wall street like a portentous eclipse.

“What do you make out of Washington political life, from what you have seen?”

This was my question to an eminently practical man, who did not believe in general principles, and he replied :

“The feature which is most curious to me is the fact that so much legislation goes by ‘friends.’ Friends in Washington never seem to inquire whether a thing be right or wrong, but they tie to a man to help him out because they are his ‘friends.’ The word ‘friends’ has assumed a curious meaning to me since I came here. I hear this or that politician discussed, and everything possible is admitted against his character ; but it is always said in the end : Jones stands by his ‘friends,’ and when another man comes up who is not accused of any improprieties everybody gives him a short damn, and says : ‘Oh, he is of no use to any body ; he never stood by a “friend” in his life !’ What makes all this funnier to me is the knowledge and belief I have, that these ‘friends’ are not paid anything. They turn in and work for a ‘friend’ like wheel-horses, without reward, trampling down and slaughtering for him ; they seem to entertain no doubt that his cause is perfectly just, and to avoid being prejudiced, they never investigate it. How is this ?”

I endeavored to supply a general principle for my friend, the



delegate, by saying that this sort of "friendship" grew out of party politics, the nominating convention, and the canvass, where one's candidate was pushed through by a mob and a howl, bonfires, processions, and every possible stultification of the individual reason. Every partisan of enough consequence becomes a "friend," and this sort of friendship holds activity to be its sole criterion. The partisan, by the time he gets to Congress or to office, holds the sum of political virtue to be merely personal faithfulness, and thus men like Buchanan reach the Presidency, and men like Grant, discovering a temporary defection in a "friend," lose confidence in human nature.

The last Electoral vote, it is to be hoped, has been counted. Like the Electors of Germany who had to choose the Emperor, the American Electoral College has probably expired.

It would still be a beautiful form of electing our President, if the public's attention to their own affairs permitted,—to give the finest modesty in each state the honorable privilege of associating their names with a President's, and, as the sons of Peers attend a King to his coronation, to usher in a popular magistrate under the personal escort of a great and noble faculty of his fellow-citizens. But what is this Electoral College of ours now-a-days? A College without scholarship or other endowments, made up of scrub caucus notorieties often, who are honored with such brief public mention as soldiers, travelers, and passing notorieties often get under the degree of D. D., L. L. D., and so forth, Pangloss-fashion.

The Electoral faculty has come to have chiefly the faculties of smelling, tasting, and handling. It was a practical proposition; but, in the rise of the great buccaneer gangs called *parties*, the College has come to be a piece of finery as cumbrous as it is dangerous. Therefore, without regret, we wipe away one of the antique conceits of our Revolutionary forefathers, and, as neither party cares anything about the matter, it will be a pity to present it to the people without making sufficient issue to bring out a vote. Add, therefore, an amendment suggesting the propriety of making the office of Senator elective by the people of each state.







We have come to that place where a national constitutional convention is desirable.

Everything has been changed by the agencies of steam, inventions, corporate movement, prosperity, and emancipation. The old Constitution is an honored charter, belonging to the dead generations. It can point the moral, adorn the tale, and suggest the framework of a new and more accordant plan of Republican Government. But, before the centennial year of independence, we should hold a grand investigation, directed from the advanced thought and observation of the country, and independent of party like the Constitutional Convention of 1787. When the times are out of joint, as we see them now, the error lies in fundamentals more probably than in particulars. We are proceeding like the America subsequent to the revolution, which endeavored to make the Articles of Confederation apply to a total change of society and instrumentalities.

After the Revolution, they proceeded very much as we have done since the Rebellion. They expatriated the Loyalists, or Tories, and then softened toward them. They issued much and various currency, and were victims of fluctuation, speculation, high prices, and corruption. Disorders broke out, and two governments in the same states confronted each other. Piecemeal remedies were proposed; but the pressure of business upon Congress prevented any general and landscape discussion of the evils of the period, until May 25th, 1787, when the Convention to revise the Articles of Confederation met in the State House at Philadelphia.

That spectacle re-presented, would be the noblest centennial exhibition for the year 1876. Better begin it on the centennial of the outbreak of the War of Independence, in 1874! With General Grant, if need be, presiding in the chair, as did Washington, and the passions of parties burnt out by their mutual and equal exhaustion, let the cry of factions be drowned, and the learned and freedom-loving, the thinking and practical leaders of the period, re-examine the needs of the time, and attend to the harmonious revision of an organic system.



Congress will never have the time, and parties will never have the honesty, to do the work. That it is needed to be done, is plain to any who feel that the questions paramount between capital and labor, producer and carrier, party and purity, are not such as can ever be examined by a Congress possessing in so little the confidence of the people as that which is passing out and that which is next to come.

A good thing has been going the rounds, attributed to Munger, of Ohio. He is said to have walked up to Whittemore on the eve of the latter's expulsion, last week and said:

"Whittemore, I know how you can hold your seat."

"How?" asked Whittemore earnestly.

"Get a Democrat to contest it."

In 1873, the flagrant case of Senator Caldwell brought out prominently the disposition of partisans to cover crimes of each other. Caldwell, whose case will be hereafter referred to, had purchased from the legislature of Kansas a seat in the Senate, and witnesses came to Washington to make oath to the fact. A committee of investigation was ordered, and a majority headed by Senator Morton, reported that Caldwell had not been honestly elected to his seat. The cloak of the caucus was at once thrown over Caldwell, and Senators Conkling, Logan, Carpenter, and Nye undertook to save him.

As I heard the speech on the Caldwell case from Senator Morton's lips, while he sat there numb in the extremities, but in the head clear, conscious and vigorous, I felt that, all things considered, he was one of the strongest characters in the Senate.

To take position, as Morton did, against Caldwell, required some mental and moral courage; for the Senate is such a little body, that fellowship prevails in it as in a female seminary. A big conspiracy gathered around Caldwell for his support, led by Simon Cameron, whose three cavalry majors were Matt Carpenter, Ross Conkling, and John Logan. Simon Cameron has outlived all the possibilities of vindication, except in the line of personal loyalty. He is the apostle of that miserable moral-





ity which will support what is termed "a friend," no matter how black the character may be, provided only that the friend returns the said loyalty to the extent of supporting any wickedness in the Senator. If this kind of morality is to prevail in public life, what safety will the constituent have? Public duty is not to be measured upon the scale of matrimonial attachment: and no worse code can be set to a great public body than merely friendly inclination. When I hear of a man in the Senate standing by his friends in all cases I turn insensibly to the man who is standing by his country.

When the Caldwell debate came up, Morton and Conkling fell into antagonistic positions. Morton's position was taken like a statesman. He saw that the Senate, under existing practices, was losing the respect of the country, and that a stop must be put to the corrupt practices of Senatorial elections. Caldwell's case was eminently fit to make the application; for Caldwell was of such a nature that degradation could not much degrade him, nor vindication much vindicate him. Nature seemed to have selected this poor little fellow as a convenient instance to be made a senatorial example of. Had the person to be degraded served his country in the war, or shown a gallant figure, or brought with him any of those human testimonials which give consideration, a chivalric man like Morton might have hesitated. I conceive that Powell Clayton is a person whom a gentleman might dislike to prosecute for corruption, because Clayton was a brave soldier and is a game carpet-bagger. But Caldwell is a little Kansas rich man,—nothing more. Mr. Morton selected him as the legitimate carcass with which to make a missile for the other buzzards of the Senate.

Mr. Conkling presumed that he could look at his legs and walk straight into the Presidency in 1876. Mr. Morton, who is a statesman, as his remarkable administration of both Indiana and Kentucky showed, during the war, made up his mind that, if he was to respect himself and his fellow-Senators, he must make corruptions odious. Hence, Morton made his report, and delivered his speech in favor of vacating Caldwell's place.





Without thinking, without knowing, guided by blind ambition, Conkling at once took the other course, expecting to read a rival out of the race for the Presidency. No greater compliment could be paid to the solid ability and executive vigor of Morton than the extent of the conspiracy which assembled to defeat him. There was that untiring worker, Cameron. There was the jesuitical and respectable legal columbiad, John Scott, —whom some think to be the best lawyer in the Senate, and correspondingly inferior as a statesman. There was Anthony, of Rhode Island, a mighty consumer of early shad and of canvas-backs, and of course, with enormous bowels of compassion. There were infirm Democrats, like Stockton and Bayard, who argue in favor of state rights, because they conceive the entire state to be their personal selves. There was Wright, of Iowa, who wished to save Caldwell to consistently save Clayton. There was Howe, of Wisconsin, whose judgment is of no consequence, but whose respectability is an ornament to the firmament as he is defined against it. I forget how many more entered into the arrangement to save Caldwell, but they were a very scared lot when they knew that the great, black, smithy face of Morton was in pursuit of them.

I did not believe that Morton would make his point, because, in the congregation of small particles, you can sometimes dust out the eyes of a giant. The moral atmosphere which over the Capitol was dark and heavy, in view of the probability of corruption being solemnly defined by the Senate as outside of its responsibilities.

But Morton is a man who kindles and enlarges by opposition, when aware that his cause is legitimate and popular. Not all the outside button-holing of Cameron, nor the froth of Conkling, made headway against his determined spirit. He had prepared a closing speech to overwhelm Caldwell; and, from what I have heard of the contents of that speech, I presume that, had he delivered it, it would have spread his reputation abroad as one of the most determined moral reformers of his time. Aware of the calamities impending in that speech, little Cald-



well, who preserves this redeeming quality, that he can feel a little, hastily delivered his resignation to the Governor of the State, and disappeared like a will-o'-the-wisp. He would have received every vote of the people who have been corruptly elected to the Senate; and you can imagine how many there can be of this class when Senator Anthony expresses the opinion that no person has been fairly elected from any of the Southern States, excepting from Virginia and Kentucky.

Amidst the scandals and exposures of 1872-3, Postmaster General Creswell, with the help of Senator Ramsey in the Senate, and Congressman Farnsworth in the House, procured the abolition of a very old and extravagant nuisance, the franking privilege. The franking privilege, like every evil which has become an institution, had its defenders, and still retains them. So had Slavery, and very pious and philosophical ones. The human mind can make its deformities and diseases philanthropic, and all the excuses for the franking privilege were directed from the centre. In the right light of responsible business and a general economy, what was worse than to entrust a chap just elected for two years to Congress, with the broadcast prerogative to ride down the mails with all his household effects, and, as a part of the same privilege, to create effects for the purpose of franking them—the wild excuses of public printing—which were rapidly assuming the development of an official journal (seriously proposed by Henry B. Anthony), to match the independent press, and be edited by Congress—arose upon the wand of the guileless franker, who saw no use of putting a girdle round the world unless it had something else to tie to. The “privilege”, so-called, cheapened the dignity of Congress, made mendicancy brazen, and set up the public deadhead as the highest example to man. The use of the privilege made the Congressman a mere scrivener, defrauding public business of his attention to write all day meaningless iterations of his prostituted name to compliment unsophisticated individuals who, for a Patent Office Report, would abdicate the rights of citizenship. The class of public man who is tumbling now,





like a feather subjected to gravity, is this franker, this scrivener. He has written his name, like a blind demagogue, till he knows no other dutiful motion. He has sought to make his name a household word at the public expense, and, like the wretch condemned by Jupiter to empty a well with a sieve, he hopes to accomplish the task of subduing mankind with the franking privilege. Hence a little warrantable forgery, and half-a-dozen clerks and shysters are invited to take lessons in penmanship, to increase the number of hands and cheat the Post-Office further. Finally, dragooning mechanism to carry on his deception, this Honorable demagogue procures to be made a series of steel-dies, and, like a counterfeiter, he and his band, with inks, sponges, and all the other appurtenances of a counterfeiting-house, stamp and despatch to a reckless constituency, tons of stuff which is nothing else but an obligation imposed upon the recipient, without cost to the sender.

It is by the infinitude of little obligations like this that the voter disappears in his manliness, and the demagogue perpetuates himself. When a tyrant has personally smiled upon the majority of his subjects, chucked a large percentage of the babies under the chin, and addressed a half-a-dozen of the orthodox societies, he has already disarmed the militia. But it so happens, in our human nature, that the exercise of these groveling processes wears out the demagogue before he has made the round of the people. The franking privilege expires, grudged by its abashed defenders, who have other charges to meet, and, to escape detection, have thrown their signet-rings into the water. As it expires, behold descend from the public gaze these greatest of all the frankers: Harlan, Colfax, Kelley!

Mr. Colfax was much befriended at the time he was shown to be involved in the Credit Mobilier exposure, by the Adams Express Company.—a corporation which is always timely in the delivery of free passes to people in public life. Hence the boxes of books which go hence to all parts of the country, not being adaptable to the mail-care. A favorite form of swindling through the mails, is to bag the books and address them: "Hon.



Issachar Squuple, United States Senator, Mizzen-Top Halls, Hough County,—care of Reverend Pelopponesus Jones.” It is all understood beforehand that Jones is to keep the books, but Squuple is to address them to himself to avoid postage. Can public life be even and direct where such evasions are the rule and not the exception?

George Francis Train said once, in a speech at Cincinnati,—and if John Wesley had said the same, it would have been no truer—“The Legislature, rides free, the press rides free, the clergy ride free. God help us! who, then, can resist these railway corporations?”

And so we may say of Congress, that it will never act for the public good until every perquisite is surrendered, and the Honorable member is an independent man.

The Christian has somewhat shared in the optimism of the times. Whenever you see a church, as a general thing, you see a mortgage. That mortgage makes an obligation, and makes rich men more welcome than moral men. It makes the sermons very soft and persuasive, and entirely unlike effective Washington correspondence. Add to this mortgage the indiscriminate and tremendous emulation of denominations to excel in numbers, honors, and dignitaries,—so that it makes all the difference in the world whether our Senator be a Baptist or a Methodist, and none whatever whether he be a brave statesman or a rapacious hypocrite,—and we have a part of the blighting insensibility of the times to personal character. The great denominations move along like the great parallel railway corporations, and the most parvenue corporation makes the most splutter. If George Whitefield lived in our day, and had the spirit of much of the denominationalism and corporate morality we see, he would have preached as follows, in place of that celebrated sermon he once made on the non-sectarianism of Heaven:

“Father Abraham, whom have you in Heaven? Have you any Baptists there?

“None!”





“‘Have you any Episcopalians there?’

“‘None.’

“‘Have you any Methodists there?’

“‘None.’

“‘Have you any Presbyterians there?’

“‘None.’

“‘Whom have you there, Father Abraham?’

“‘Chiefly members of Congress, vouched for by the Evangelical Society!’”

Such are some of the records of malfeasance, temptation, and folly in modern Washington. To collect these scandals and put them into a book is not the most agreeable form of composition, but the people must know these things in order to be advised of the dangers surrounding the precious and blood-bought federal state in which are comprised all our hopes, opportunities, and blessings. Around the state lie heaped the highest exploits, the noblest thoughts, the dearest sacrifices, and the bloodiest crimes of man's long transmigration. With all the material progress and the liberalization achieved by the past century, the state is still our all. In particulars it is little unlike the states of the past; two furious parties struggle in its porticoes. When at the highest prosperity it seems nearest destruction. The most democratic sacrifices for it often turn it to be our most formidable tyrant. It is strengthened by revolt, purified by poverty, and corrupted by success. It is worst when most glorious, feeblest when widest, most endangered when most content. And still we labor upon our Babel, knowing all this, because, though we can never build it into heaven, we will never build it downward. Build upon it we must, for while it is our tower, it is also our home. If it shall so happen that heaven, to mock our pride, must shatter this tall fabric, and by some destiny of confusion scatter its builders, still will its ruins be a part of the earth, and its memory a chapter of man.

It is the most democratic experiment ever attempted by a religious people upon the newest and widest area. Like every





experiment, its materials were of more consequence than its chemists; out of the conditions of the ground, the period, and the mingling people, the government fashioned itself upon the prevailing mind of the new state. Sovereignty was conceded to begin in the people; government was intrusted to their representatives, and justice was set apart, without the passions, but within the reach of all. To break the force of local whirlwinds, parts of the state were decreed supreme in things of neighborhood right, and preserving the outlines of their origin and tradition. Two spontaneous parties stepped forth from the crowd to be the rival champions of this new state, and while each of them has at times resisted the other even to violence, both have been alternately and equally the rescuers of the state, and the state from the people. The country has survived every peril. Its young career is written in letters of white, upon the debit side of the world. Too precious not to be even in peril, too nicely balanced not to be temporarily swayed to injustice and license, it is yet far from the condition predicted of it by Fisher Ames, who said, "we were fast becoming too large for union, too sordid for patriotism, and too democratic for liberty."



## CHAPTER XXII.

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### THE SUPREME COURT AND LOCAL JUSTICE AT WASHINGTON.

The old city hall of Washington has been the seat of Criminal, Common Law and Equity Courts of Columbia since its completion. In the rear stands the jail, near by the site of its predecessor. The penitentiary of the District, at Arsenal Point, was torn down after the conspirators against the life of President Lincoln had been confined and hanged there, and felons for long terms are now sent to Albany penitentiary. A Reform School is, at the present writing, going up on the site of Fort Lincoln near Bladensburg. There are five judges on the District bench, and the Court, as a United States Court, has wider jurisdiction than any District Court in the Union. The majority of the Judges have of late received their places for political services in remote parts of the country. The police system of Columbia is regulated by five Commissioners, and administered by a Major and Superintendent. There are nine station houses. The Capitol police constitute an independent force at the Capitol edifice and grounds, numbering about forty private watchmen, presided over by a Captain. There are many commissions and minor courts sitting in the city, and the Court of Claims in the Capitol building is organized with five judges. A grand police court was established in 1869. The police court, partaking of its political origin and style of associations, has never enjoyed great confidence in the District.

The Department of Justice is the name of the reorganized





Attorney General's office. The Attorney General presides over it; there are a Solicitor General, and two Assistant Attorneys General. Solicitors in three of the Departments, and an Examiner of claims for the State Department.

The Supreme Court of the United States sits in the Capitol Edifice, and it consists of nine Justices, a Clerk, a Marshal, and a Reporter. For each Justice there is a Judicial circuit, covering a portion of the Union.

There is one day at Washington when our Government loses its democratic form, and puts on the garments and solemnity of its monarchical original. That is the opening day of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The precinct of the Supreme Court has an atmosphere and a silence about it which cannot fail to strike the stranger here, even when Congress is sitting. As you pass between the Senate and the House of Representatives, by that long arched corridor which traverses the entire length of the former Capitol, you come to a series of rooms which are haunted in their lobbies by no loiterers, lighted by one single concave skylight, a dark and avoided place, with closed doors, with a policeman near by to say, "walk quietly," "pass on," "the Court is sitting." And, perhaps, while you pause inquisitively in the gloom, a rosewood door in the corridor opens, a Marshal cries: "Make way for the Honorable the Judges of the Supreme Court." And all bystanders falling back, nine venerable men, of portly girth and ascetic countenances, led by one sanctified face, cross the corridor and disappear behind a second rosewood door, which is closed by a negro, funereal as a colored Baptist preacher on immersing day. The effect of this procession on the casual mind is, that somebody is going to be hanged or buried alive, and I have always noticed that any vagrant negroes waiting near, slink off with manifest perturbation, as if they were presently to be seized and handed over to the Holy Inquisition, and burned up with their photographs in Fox's Book of Martyrs.

The officials of this portion of the Capitol, also, are quite different from the smart, intriguing or parasite-looking persons



who belong to the legislative departments. The Clerk has been here forty-two years; the Master of the Robes appears never to have been born at all, but to belong to a sort of judicial antiquity; old colored men of a former generation, whose lives heaven has bountifully lengthened out, because not even heaven could replace them, keep the ante-rooms and go upon the errands with a consistent shuffle, and with shoulders bearing a vast responsibility. Rip Van Winkle, when he got up on the mountains amongst the gray-faced pirates, found just such a lot of cheerful ancients as constitute the helpmates of the Supreme Court. The furniture of this part of the Capitol, also, is of a material and style not current in the rest of the building. We see no black walnut chairs, no oiled sideboards or desks, nothing whatever of the smart and patented forms of iron notable in the wings. Everything here is rosewood or mahogany, built at a time when the wood was well seasoned, when we had no affectations of Etruscan, or modern Italian, or Arabic forms, and followed the classics or simplicity. The furniture, indeed, is what remains of the old Capitol, and the old life of the Republic—sofas, often covered anew, within whose frames the brethren of John Marshall sat; high-backed chairs, which have borne up the snake-like saintliness of Aaron Burr, or George Clinton's solid old age. The desks, the book-cases, the tables are the same which belonged to the United States Senate in former days; for until the completion of the present grand Senate Chamber, the quarters of the present Supreme Court were occupied by the Senate, and the Court possessed what is now the Supreme Court library, directly beneath its present Chamber. We shall see further on, that the form of the rooms is peculiar, and in keeping with its mystery and respectability.

The link between the heroic past and our burlesquing present was, until recently, the Marshal; for attached to this Court is a Clerk, a Marshal, and a Reporter—all of them officers suppositiously removed from partisan influence, and therefore honorable as the highest positions of merely transient occupation. To be Clerk of the Supreme Court is to be in better





regard socially, and in better self-esteem, than to be Clerk of Congress, or even Secretary of the Senate; for latterly, partisanship has laid hands upon the Senatorial places, and comprised them in the general scramble of honors. The Marshal of the Supreme Court is now Mr. John G. Nicolay, long Secretary of Abraham Lincoln, and successor of Mr. Richard C. Parsons, of Cleveland, Ohio, who had been a Speaker of Assembly, Consul to Rio Janeiro, and had filled other places of trust, and who was the friend of Governor Chase before he became Chief Justice. While his fine, straight figure and scrupulous dress seemed like a gorgeous veneering upon this funereal piece of furniture, he had yet elderly tastes in upholstery, and a good eye for respectable effects, which has made the new fixings of the Court a match for past patterns. Closer inspection proves that, if peculiar, the judicial apartments are still the most comfortable and inviting in the edifice, tawdry in nothing, and apparently copied from the solid and substantial interiors of English Judicial halls, while much of the rest of the Capitol is decorated after the worst French models, in stencils, mouldings, florid carpetings, and "loud" styles of furniture. It is the difference between Mount Vernon and Fiske's Opera House office.

The Marshal takes us, before the opening of the Court, into his own exquisite little room, in ground-plan like the section of a dome, lighted by one large window which opens upon the noble portico of the Central Capitol, and in the concavity at the foot stands a most graceful marble mantel and fire-place, slender in its traceries, as if of vegetable growth. The floor is covered with a velvet office carpet, whose prevailing tint is a rich golden brown, and the pattern is in miniatures. A bust of Chief Justice Chase, and a proof copy of Marshall's Lincoln, adorn the walls. A rosewood washstand and table, a safe and chairs complete the equipment, and it is such a room as one with some grand literary intention would wish to be imprisoned in for the remainder of his life. The dimensions of this room are twenty-five by ten feet, with a most noble ceiling in height,





and of so simple moulding and proportions, that it might be the chamber of Apollo himself.

The Marshal of this Court is its executive officer; he serves its processes personally or by deputy, and makes the disbursements for its upholstery, and is its ceremonial officer, like the Gentleman-Usher to the Black-Rod in the House of Lords. His salary is \$4,000 a year.

Next we visit the private room of the Attorney-General of the United States, by crossing a vestibule carpeted in velvet also, and evading the Marshal's door, to the hall of the Supreme Court. In a nook behind the Judges' platform is the most lovely resting place in the world, its furniture a rosewood secretary, one soft high-backed chair, one other chair, and a fireplace; a luxuriously warm carpet covers the floor, and a tall window peeps out upon the portico and its statuary. While the Court is sitting, the Attorney-General must spend much of his time here, convenient to his interests in the Court. He has \$6,000 a year, three clerks, and a messenger. The dimensions of the Supreme Court Chamber are seventy-five feet chord, and forty-five feet in height; beneath it is the valuable law library, occupying the old Supreme Court Chamber.

The present Court Chamber is the noblest apartment in proportion and architecture, considering its small size, in the United States, and claimed by *connoisseurs* to be the most beautiful court-room in the world. Until the winter of 1860 it was the historic Senate Chamber, and it gave up its legislative functions at the brink of the new national era. It is resonant to the reverent man, with the echoes of fifty years of republican eloquence, and it is one of the few apartments which seem worthy and, indeed, almost conscious of their associations. Imagine the interior of one-half of a low dome,—the floor of a semi-circle, and along the diameter, upon a raised platform, the cushioned high-backed seats of the Judges, with the apex of the half dome just above the middle chair, where the Chief Justice is to sit. The height of the dome above the Chief Justice is forty-five feet, the greatest width of the room is sev-



enty-five feet, and of course its transverse line is just half this distance. The whole floor is carpeted with the same rich golden-brown medallion which we have seen on the Marshal's floor, and this gives modern warmth and strength of color to the fine classical architecture of the room itself, which is of unique purity. Behind the Judges a screen of Ionic columns of green breccia, with white marble capitals supports a most airy gallery, over which the daylight streams through a soft curtain of crimson, giving a delicate tint to the stuccoed panels in the domed ceiling, and flooding the floor with the grateful light of perpetual autumn. On the wall in front of him, everywhere equidistant, the Chief Justice can see, set upon consoles, busts of each of his predecessors save Taney—and admirable names and faces are they, with concentrated eyes regarding him, their living suggestor: Jay, Rutledge, Ellsworth, Marshall. Had ours been a republic with an elective life-magistrate, perhaps the number of these Judges would have represented the number of administrations we should have had—six instead of eighteen.

Before the Judge is a narrow bar and railing, with crimson screen; there are nine chairs; on either hand are doors of official entry and exit, and opposite the main doors for spectators. The Clerk, reporter, and crier have desks beneath the Judges'; the main central area of the court-room has a line of baize-covered tables, with the chairs of attorneys interspersed, and within the bar are two short rows of chairs for spectators or witnesses, while without it is a cushioned bench for mere listeners or intruders, but seldom are these seats filled, for there is nothing of dramatic intensity to be seen or heard in the Supreme Court. It is a tribunal of ultimate authority within the region of pure law, and does but listen to counsel, and express judgment after the calm manner of blind Justice herself.

When a stranger of an uneducated eye enters this Supreme Court-room, he feels the sincerity, so to speak, of its atmosphere and influence, after being stunned, confused, and bewil-





dered by the innumerable new and frequently meretricious objects of the great bulk of the Capitol. At a glance he perceives all that is, the repose of the place relieves his eye, and whatever is said, though without ornament or earnestness, is impressed upon his reason. So it happens that quite a dull man can sit here attentively for an hour to hear an application of argument to law, while the boldest philippic in the House of Representatives would impress him like the eloquence of a great bell hammer. The dimensions of the hall dignify the human figure, and its acoustic properties are magical.

The Marshal leads the way across the platform of the Judges. We stop awhile to try the effect of a rest in the chair of a learned Judge, and it is wonderfully introductory to sleep. One of the Judges said sometime ago that the greatest trial he had was to keep awake.

"The proceedings of the Court are so quiet and rational," he said; "so seldom can one hitch, or smile, or be diverted, that often, after sitting up till 1 or 2 o'clock, reading upon a case, or writing a decision, I feel a constant fear of falling to sleep."

On the side of the court-room opposite the Marshal's office is the "Judges' Walk," a softly carpeted hall, without furniture or ornament, through which, preceded by a Deputy Marshal, the whole bench, in single file, enter upon or depart from their sittings. The shape of this hall is polygonal, with the side nearest the Court convex. A rosewood door closes this walk from the great corridor of the Capitol, across which we are led by the Marshal, and a bell at the rosewood door opposite calls up the Master of the Robes, a negro gentleman of the olden time, with law and frost showing venerably in his combed wool. He is dressed in statesman's black, and knows a lawyer from any other sort of a gentleman, and a Judge from a lawyer. It is needless to say that he does not know politicians at all. He recognizes them as necessary evils; their salutations he may reply to; but there is an expression in his elderly, wrinkled face, and demure eye, which says plainly as a sermon:



"This acquaintance goes no further!" What reporter or author ever held an "interview" with this reverent old bachelor in the law? He probably never spoke to a newspaper man, or a literary man in his life; for he has descended to us from that period when Journalist forebore his iconoclastic hand from jurists and from statesmen, when duels were fought without published comment, and errors of speech or appetite found no Cerberian scribe near by, to bark the frailties of greatness around the world. Yet, what delicious pinches of original anecdote he may have to tell; what titbits of hearsay, and morsels and giblets of incident to enliven a dozen books of biography; for he has smoothed with his own hand the wrinkles from the robes of thirty years of Justice and of Justices.

Behind the door of the room which we have entered hang the long silken gowns of the Judges of the Supreme Court. There is one learned Judge, living in one of the leading Western States, whose robe requires fourteen yards of black silk to encompass his ample form, and as all the Judges pay for their own gowns, here is a small matter of seventy dollars to come out of the salary of a blind man—all Judges being blind. Every Court-day morning, the standard-bearers of our jurisprudence must have this black flag run up on them by their colored attendant. The gowns are buttoned up the back, and reach to the boots, and their capacious sleeves fall in many a learned fold to the wrist. The likeness they bear in these clerical garments to the College of Cardinals, led an Irish gentleman from Milwaukee to say that he saw the President and the rest of the government going to mass as "illigant" as Cardinal Wiseman himself. Not less extravagant have been the ultra-democratic expressions of some Republican partisans, who, during the Impeachment trial, and while the Supreme Court was considering the Reconstruction cases brought before it, were loud in their denunciation of this bench as a set of aristocrats, wearing "Monarchical costume." The cosmopolitan and philosophic mind of General Butler led this sentiment; and so high did the feeling go that I expected daily to hear of





a mob rushing on the Judges as they went to open Court, throwing them down on the marble floor, and then and there stripping them to their boots and breeches. There is really no need for this costume; but what Judge cares to lead in a movement for its abolition? The Judges sit for life, so that there is no new bench coming in at any one time; the old Judges are thus used to the costume, and the new one does not wish to be a meddler. It is too small a subject for a jurist to consider, and too big a one for an outsider to influence.

The room into which we have come is the Judges' "robing room," a long, lofty, and imposing apartment, carpeted by a large-figured tapestry, in tolerably bright colors, and lighted by three lofty windows, which are shaded with crimson damask curtains. A beautiful marble mantelpiece, of an old pattern, stands in the middle of one of the wide sides, and facing this, across the width of the room, is the high-backed hair-cloth chair of the Chief Justice. At his right hand is a long table, with chairs reaching down it, and stationery, paper knives, etc., for each judge. The judges are careful of their stationery, unlike congressmen, and many of the utensils are quite worn. While I never saw a congressman resume his old implements at the beginning of a new session. Thus it happens that, including the salaries of the judges, the expenses of the Supreme Bench of the United States are less than those of any United States Circuit Court which exists.

Between the Chief Justice and the fire is a hair-cloth dais, or bordered lounge, low and without a back, and each of its three seats is nearly a good square in surface. This accommodates the three Daniel Lamberts of the bench, and I am told that the Supreme Court has never been without a large proportion of Colossuses upon it. Wanted, somebody to explain the reciprocal nature of victuals and law, appetite and justice! On the mantel is an ebony clock; on the other side of the fire are two other huge lounges; a couple of antediluvian escritoirs, such as Noah might have furnished the ark with, occupy corners. The gas hangs respectably.





This is the retiring room of the judges, their place of assemblage, and their parlor. Its end window commands the terraces, and a fine view of the City of Washington. This room was long the chamber of the Vice-Presidents of the United States, and it bears out the air of that middle period of our history between the aristocratic and the commercial age.

Opening off the robing room is the office of the Clerk of the Supreme Court, Daniel Wesley Middleton, a narrow apartment, ornamented with an oil painting of his predecessor in the clerkship, and a portrait of a long-departed justice. Here, also, and in the next and larger room, where the half-dozen assistant clerks have desks, the furniture is old and picturesque, and much of it was formerly used by the Secretaries of the Senate. This series of rooms looks out upon the city, and the terraced gardens of the Capitol. Mr. Middleton is the *beau ideal* of an old office-holder, and, as I have said, he has been here forty-two years, or since the era of Van Buren. He has saved a pleasant fortune, is highly respected, is full of *bon hommie* and reminiscence, and seems capable of surviving forty-two years of jurisprudence to come.

All the above rooms lie upon the second or main floor of the Capitol, and form a square, cut in half by the great corridor; but, under these rooms is still another series of judicial apartments—a law library, a large room where the judges retire to read law, and to vote upon their decisions, and apartments for bathing, etc.

The “deciding room” is large, carpeted, tolerably gloomy, and furnished with the same marble pattern of fireplace and furniture, while shelves of books surround it, and a large table extends down the centre. Seated at the head of the table, the Chief Justice presides, while decisions are being debated. Nearly 170 decisions were rendered during the last session, beginning in December, 1868, and the judges have (in the words of an official) to work “like dogs,” reading, hearing, writing, conferring, so that they have been at last relieved



from their immense circuit duty, and will, hereafter, sit seven months of the year at Washington.

At the novel time of opening court, the justices' filed to their chairs, and the crier made announcement:

"Oyez! Oyez! All persons having business before the Supreme Court of the United States are requested to draw near and give attention, for their honors, the Justices of the Supreme Court, are approaching to take their places upon the bench. God save the United States."

Here the Deputy Marshal bows in the Court; gravity takes the place of bustle, and the highest tribunal is waiting for a quorum.

The only scandal attending the Supreme Court in recent times was the selection of two justices in 1870 to reverse a former decision on the subject of legal tender payments.

The Local District Bar is made up of a hundred or two hundred lawyers. Some of them are fair, some shrewd. Daudge is the head of the bar. Bradley, senior, does business now in a weak way through his son, a fat, curly-haired, amiable young man. Old Bradley is rich, venomous, played-out, though he can still wriggle a little, like the tail of a snake till sundown. The sun of slavery is set. The strut which poor human nature gave itself because it could lick a nigger if it wanted to, is degenerated to a grovel. Wide lie the poor-house doors. The sons inherit the thirst of their fathers. Chiefly, and out of the distilled blood of Africa, the cup is benzine, which is burning up the residue of the rebellion. As it was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether!"

"Ned" Price, is one of the oddities at the bar of the District. Price used to be a prize fighter, and like all retired pugilists he opened a Faro Bank in Washington. Being a fellow of adventure and natural talent, he familiarized himself with two or three foreign languages, and finally studied law in the office of Carusi, the son of an old dancing master here. He passed the examination and was admitted to the bar. So





that, next to divine or religious influence, a good round head is the best redeemer of one's self. Price may take a "stake" now and then to this writing, but I think not. He is a stalwart and amiable rough, standing up like a bull, and smiling like a broad sear.

Dick Merriek is the light tragedian of the bar—the stage-struck attorney, who loses sleep unless he makes a speech between the rising of the sun and the going down thereof.

Philip Barton Key used to be District-Attorney of this Court. He once had before him a man who slew another for debauching his home, and his labors to convict the other were long and protracted. It being proved that the party killed was a professional seducer, Key made a speech to his memory, concluding with:

"No longer seek his merits to disclose,  
Nor draw his frailties from their dread abode,—  
There they alike in trembling hope repose,—  
The bosom of his Father and his God."

In a few months, the didactic seducer was himself made a street spectacle of retribution. The Sickles trial happening in this old court room, was the social witches' meeting before the Rebellion. Stirring up the poison cauldron of a woman's dishonor and a Capital's rottenness, the demons and hags collected there, went off on a broomstick to debauch the Thanes and Clans of the nation to treason—Ould and Winder to starve prisoners; some here, some there. Double, double, toil and trouble.

One of the longest and most remarkable trials here, was that of the case of Tillotson Brown's widow. She had been the mistress of Brown for many years, and had a daughter grown up, and, I think, married. She proved that Brown had married her at last, and the legitimacy of the daughter came up. Tillotson Brown was brother to Marshall Brown, now a neighbor of General Grant, and one of the owners of the valuable Brown's Hotel property, and Marshall Brown contested the girl's legitimacy on behalf of the rich estate. This opened up the vile particulars of a delicate question, and trial after trial prolonged



the stench of the case. At last the widow won it, and she lives now, within view of the court room, in one of the most sumptuous residences of Washington. Few who pass it, and see the carved bombshells upon the brown stone balustrade, know the social explosion that happened around that dwelling. The carriage goes and comes; the yard is full of flowers; canary and mocking birds sing in the windows. This is Washington. This is the world!

The town is changed for the better now. People go to church, and notably to the churches of dominant New England faiths, in greater numbers and gravity than they used. The low places are barred fast of Sabbaths. Men keep at home after tea time, and family life has one quiet night in the week.

To return to Senator Drake and the Court of Claims, of which he is Chief Justice. That Court sits under the library of Congress, in the Capitol Building, and has five Judges, four of them placed there in 1863, when the number and the jurisdiction were increased. The venerable David Wilmot, the ardent Pennsylvania free trader, has been replaced upon this bench by Samuel Milligan, 1870. The retiring Chief Justice Joseph Casey, is a native of Maryland, but he represented the Harrisburg (Pa.) District in Congress, twenty years ago. The other Justices, Peck, Nott, and Loring, are all grave, judicial men, who have served faithfully for smaller salaries. Judge Peck lives at Georgetown. Judge Nott has just been able to build himself a small, tasteful residence here. This Court was hooped round with safeguards from the beginning, and its record is believed to be dutiful and honorable, a strict equity tribunal, operating under the laws, and responsible, in test cases, to the ruling of the Supreme Court. It was especially provided in the terms of its organization, that members of Congress should not practice before it.







MOUNT VERNON.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

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### A PICTURE OF MT. VERNON IN 1789.

On a Tuesday morning, the 14th of April, 1789, a venerable old gentleman, with fine eyes, an amiable countenance, and long, white locks, rode into the lawn of Mount Vernon, coming from Alexandria. Two gentlemen of the latter town accompanied him. It was between 10 and 11 o'clock. A negro man sallied out to take the nags, and the old gentleman, entering the mansion, was received by Mrs. Washington.

"Why, Mr. Thompson," said the good lady, "where are you from, and how are your people?"

"From New York, Madame," answered the old man. "I come to Mount Vernon on a good errand, for the country at least. The General has been elected President of the United States under the new Constitution, and I am the bearer of the happy tidings in a letter from John Langdon, the President of the Senate."

The General was out visiting his farm, however, and the guests were entertained for two or three hours, as we take care





of our visitors in the country nowadays. A glass of the General's favorite Madeira, imported in the cask, was probably not the worst provision made for them, and the cheerful gossip of Mrs. Washington, who had known Mr. Thompson, and visited his house in Philadelphia, helped to enliven the time. This grave and respectable old man was the link between the new Government at New York, and the new Magistrate at Mount Vernon. Charles Thompson had been the Secretary through all its eventful career of the Continental Congress which had directed the cause of the Colonies from desultory revolt to Independence and to Union, and now he had ridden over the long and difficult roads to apprise the first President of the Republic of the wishes of his countrymen. At 1 o'clock, General Washington rode into the lawn of Mount Vernon, in appearance what Custis, his adopted son, has described :

An old gentleman, riding alone, in plain drab clothes, a broad-brimmed white hat, a hickory switch in his hand, and carrying an umbrella with a long staff, which is attached to his saddle-bow. The umbrella was used to shelter him from the sun, for his skin was tender and easily affected by its rays.

Washington greeted Mr. Thompson with grave cordiality, as was his wont, inquiring for his family, and divining already the object of his visit, broke the seal of John Langdon's official letter. Dinner followed, and, while the visitors retired to converse or stroll about the grounds, the President-elect wrote a letter to the President of the Senate, and sent it forthwith to the Post-Office at Alexandria by a servant. The letter was as follows :

“MOUNT VERNON, April 14th, 1789.

“SIR:—I had the honor to receive your official communication, by the hand of Mr. Secretary Thompson, about 1 o'clock this day. Having concluded to obey the important and flattering call of my country, and having been impressed with the idea of the expediency of my being with Congress at as early a period as possible, I propose to commence my journey on Thursday morning, which will be the day after to-morrow.”

This done, the rest of the day passed in conferences between



Washington and his wife, in the preparation of his baggage for the not-unexpected journey, while meantime the distinguished guest was amused by the young official household in the library and grounds.

At Mount Vernon was one of the brilliant Bohemians of his time, David Humphreys, colonel, poet, biographer, translator of plays, foreign traveler, courtier, and delightful fellow generally, with locks like Hyperion, a "killing" countenance, and no fortune to speak of; so he had become a permanent guest of his old General. To him Thompson was turned over for hospitality, and we may suppose them mixing the grog, discussing France and the pleasures of the Palais Royale, and guessing the names in the new Cabinet with the staid Secretary, Tobias Lear, a New Englander, like Humphreys; while, perhaps, the latter recited his tolerably bad rhymes:

"By broad Potomack's azure tide,  
Where Vernon's mount, in sylvan pride,  
Displays its beauties far,  
Great Washington, to peaceful shades,  
Where no unhallowed wish invades,  
Retired from fields of war."

The estate of Washington in this pleasant springtime of the year, was well adapted, with its deep shade and broad, peaceful landscapes, to be the home of the most honored American. Amidst the long grass of its lawn stood the mansion of Mount Vernon, such as we behold it now, when it has ceased to become a home, and has become a shrine,—a low-roofed, painted straight edifice, with a high piazza on the river-front, which covers the two stories; and the whole is built of wood, cut in blocks to imitate stone. The light columns which uphold the porch are also of wood, sanded. There are dormer windows in all the four sloping sides of the roof, and a cupola full of wasps' nests, surmounts the whole, from which you can see the long reaches of the river. The house and immediate out-buildings could be built, at the present price of lumber and labor, for about thirty thousand dollars. But nobody would now





build such a house. Instead of the high, hollow portico covering the whole front of the building, we would now put a low veranda, and upper balconies. Instead of imitating stone, we would carve the wood into pleasing designs, or use stone outright. The interior of the mansion is pleasantly habitable to this day, but the naked, white-washed walls look very blank. The rooms are generally low of ceiling, and we would think it a hardship to live in the room where the Hero of the American hemisphere died. Neither gas, nor water-pipes, nor stoves, nor wall-paper, nor a kitchen under the mutual roof,—but simply a library, a drawing-room, with a carved marble-mantel, and an old, rusty, fine harpsichord; a hall through the house,—a reaching up for grandeur with feeble implements; some plain bed-chambers, and a few reliëfs of the great man;—this is Mount Vernon as an abandoned home. The house is now above a century and a quarter old, and good for another century, if pieced up and restored from time to time. Back of it a pair of covered walks reach to the clean negro-quarters, between which is seen a rear lawn, with garden-walls on the sides; and across the lawn passes the road to Alexandria and Fredericksburg, so often ridden by the General. The gardens are of a showy, imposing sort. He inherited this house from his half-brother, and lived in it for fifty years, not counting seven years during the Revolution, when he was absent.

Washington, the son of a second wife, had been married to a widow fifteen years when he was put at the head of the Colonial armies. He belonged to a military and commercial family; rather New-Englanders in thrift and enterprise than like the baronial planters round about them. But he was a man who grew in every quality, except pecuniary liberality, and no book-keeper in Connecticut watched his accounts with more closeness, although he was very rich and childless. He was the most perfect fruit of virtuous mediocrity, and the highest exemplar of a disciplined life which the scrupulous, the prudent, and the brave can study. Every triumph he had was a genuine one, if not a difficult one. Guizot, the best student of



his larger life, who had in his eye of neighborhood the careers of all the great men of that quarter of a century, including Bonaparte, Talleyrand, and Wellington, said that Washington's power came from his confidence in his own views, and his resoluteness in acting upon them; and that no great man was ever tried by all tests and came out so perfectly. Jefferson said that he was the only man in the United States who possessed the confidence of all, and that his executive talents were superior to those of any man in the world. He had wonderful power in influencing men by honorable sentiments, and he never gave a man an office to quiet him or gain him over. His character was a little picturesque, but he was as plain as Lincoln in the parts which he himself prescribed.

In that day Mount Vernon had all the fame it still retains. Engravings of it were common in Europe and America, and it was a place of resort for the curious and the eminent, the stranger and the politician, because its proprietor stood first amongst the private gentlemen of the world. His battles and his wisdom, his Republican principles, and the purity of his character, recommended him to men as the living model of all that Rousseau had delineated—a great unselfish citizen. The time had come when the vague, poetic, and earnest aspirations of humanity inclined towards this stamp of man. Europe did not contain his like. The mighty writers there had filled the people with a scorn for kings, while yet they had not created one citizen-hero. Distance led them to enchantment with the name and person of Washington; and this was he, at home amongst his slaves, with his busy, knitting housewife, on the high, sequestered shores of the Potomac. He was aware of his fame, for every mail expressed it in the eulogies of authors, journalists, statesmen, and even princes. The gravity of public thoughts and things had deepened the shadows of a life by temperament reflective, almost austere; and this planter and farmer had grown judicial in his calmness and equipoise, so that he was already a Magistrate in intellect, and his election did not, probably, so much as ruffle his feelings.





His mansion was a museum, illustrative of the ordinary culture and tastes of a planter of his period. In his parlor, doubtless, were these effigies which he had ordered from France thirty years before.

"A bust of Alexander the Great ; another of Julius Cæsar ; another of Charles XII. of Sweden ; another of the Duke of Marlborough, of Prince Eugene of Savoy ; and a sixth of Frederick the Great, King of Prussia.

"These are not to exceed fifteen inches in height, nor ten in width.

"Two wild beasts, not to exceed twelve inches in height, nor eighteen inches in length.

"Sundry small ornaments for chimney-piece."—(Washington's directions to his foreign factor.)

There had been exemplars of Washington at a younger period, when the military art was his delight. During the long war of the Revolution, his estate had escaped pillage, and what had since been collected were mainly the gifts of friends, or the reward of arms and eminence. But it appears from what remains to us, that Mount Vernon was supplied with all the comforts and many of the luxuries of his time,—a period when foreign art and literature were at a high standard, and skill and science had begun to look for their patrons below Palaces and Ministers of State, to the firesides of the prosperous middle-class. The social revolution had already transpired in America and in Europe. Commerce, education, and accumulated wealth had insensibly triumphed over ranks and reverences. The Democratic age had not fairly dawned, but the men lived who were to lead it, and at the head of the middle class of conservative Republicans in America stood the men of homesteads, broad lands, and large crops, like Washington. They were yet to have a few years of semi-supremacy ; but a fiercer wave of equality was gathering in the distance, which should spare Mount Vernon alone amongst family shrines.

Washington was rich, but not the richest of the planters. At least two Presidents were to succeed him, better burdened





with money and lands. He was, however, always above the fear of poverty, excepting the possible calamities of war ; and the personal supervision of as many acres, servitors, and interests would be thought onerous in our time. Yet he was ever seeking, later in life, to increase the revenues of his farms, to lease, or to colonize them.

His property was chiefly in stock, slaves, and land, but the land was already showing signs of giving out, and he made reference more than once to Pennsylvania and Maryland, "Where their wheat is better than ours can be, till we get into the same good management."

Probably no account of his estate can be found so reliable as that of the President himself, written to Arthur Young, a celebrated English authority on agricultural matters, just at the close of his first term of office :

"No estate in United America," said Washington, "is more pleasantly situated than this. It lies in a high, dry, and healthy country, three hundred miles by water from the sea, and, as you will see by the plan, on one of the finest rivers in the world. Its margin is washed by more than ten miles of tide-water ; from the bed of which, and the innumerable coves, inlets, and small marshes, with which it abounds, an inexhaustible fund of rich mud may be drawn, as a manure, either to be used separately or in a compost, according to the judgment of the farmer. It is situated in a latitude between the extremes of heat and cold, and is the same distance by land and water, with good roads and the best navigation, to and from the Federal City, Alexandria, and Georgetown ; distant from the first, twelve ; from the second nine ; and from the last, sixteen miles. The Federal City, in the year 1800, will become the seat of the General Government of the United States. It is increasing fast in buildings, and rising into consequence ; and will, I have no doubt, from the advantages given to it by nature, and its proximity to a rich interior country, and the Western territory, become the emporium of the United States."



"The soil of the tract of which I am speaking is a good loam, more inclined, however, to clay than sand. From use, and I might add, abuse, it is become more and more consolidated, and, of course, heavier to work. The greater part is a grayish clay ; some part is dark mould ; a very little is inclined to sand ; and scarcely any to stone."

"A husbandman's wish would not lay the farms more level than they are ; and yet some of the fields, but in no great degree, are washed into gullies, from which all of them have not yet recovered."

"This river, which encompasses the land the distance above mentioned, is well supplied with various kinds of fish at all seasons of the year ; and in the spring, with the greatest profusion of shad, herring, bass, carp, perch, sturgeon, &c. Several valuable fisheries appertain to the State ; the whole shore, in short, is one entire fishery."

"There are, as you will perceive by the plan, four farms besides that at the mansion-house ; these four contain 3,200 acres of cultivated land, to which some hundreds more adjoining, as may be seen, might be added, if a greater should be required."

Again, he wrote to a foreign factor, to whom he shipped his tobacco, pretty much as Horace Greeley might write :

"I am possessed of several plantations on this river (Potomac), and the fine lands of Shenandoah, and should be glad if you would ingeniously tell me what prices I might expect you to render for tobacco made thereon, of the same seed as that of the estates, and managed in every respect in the same manner as the best tobaccos on James and York Rivers are."

It was the custom of the Virginian planters, living upon tide-water, with the coasts deeply indented everywhere, to ship their crops direct from their estates to Bristol or London. Washington wrote : "The best Potomac harbor (Piscataway) is within sight of my door. It has this great advantage, besides good anchorage and lying safe from the winds, that it is





out of the way of the worm, which is very hurtful to shipping a little lower down, and lies in a very plentiful part of the country."

The manner of putting crops aboard ship was generally by the use of scows, which could come up the shallow streams. Thus, he wrote :

"So soon as Mr. Lund Washington returns from Frederick, I shall cause my wheat to be delivered at your landing, on Four Miles Run Creek, if flats can get to it conveniently."

A few passages from the correspondence of Washington will make plain his mode of life and his business habits. He was always minute in his instructions to his superintendent, as thus, when closing up a notification to build roads :

"At all times they must proceed in the manner which has been directed formerly ; and, in making the new roads from the Ferry to the Mill, and from the Tumbling Dam across the Neck, till it communicate with the Alexandria road, as has been pointed out on the spot."

This shows that, though a planter, he was always a man of affairs, having personal cognizance of all belonging to him.

Again :

"When the brick work is executed at the Ferry Barn, Gunner and Davis must repair to Doque Run, and make bricks there, at the place and in the manner which have been directed, that I may have no salmon bricks in that building.

"Oyster shells should be bought wherever they are offered for sale, if good, and on reasonable terms."

As a landlord and creditor, Washington was exacting but not harsh. The year he was elected President, he wrote as to the collection of rents and debts :

"Little is expected from the justice of those who have been long indulged."

To his wife, grandchildren, and his own nephews and nieces, he was provident, but still never lavish. In the same year as above he wrote to certain needy ones :



"You will use your best endeavors to obtain the means for support of G. and L. Washington, who, I expect, will board, till something further can be decided on, with Dr. Ceaiik, who must be requested to see that they are decently and properly provided with clothes from Mr. Porter's store. He will give them a credit on my becoming answerable to him for the payment. And, as I know of no resource that H. has for supplies but from me, Fanny will, from time to time, as occasion may require, have such things got for her, on my account, as she shall judge necessary."

These paragraphs convey to us, as fully as the twelve volumes of Sparks, the tone of the first Magistrate in affairs of private life. His estate, like that of many Virginians, labored under disadvantages from the unthrifty agriculture of slaves, and the sort of improvidence which large estates seem to necessitate. Seven years after the period at which this chapter begins, he said :

"From what I have said, that the present prices of land in Pennsylvania are higher than they are in Maryland or Virginia, although they are not of superior quality, two reasons have already been assigned: First, that in the settled part of it, the land is divided into smaller farms, and is more improved; and, secondly, it is in a greater degree than any other the receptacle of emigrants, who receive their first impressions in Philadelphia, and rarely look beyond the limits of the State. But besides these, two other causes, not a little operative, may be added, namely: that until Congress passed general laws relative to naturalization and citizenship, foreigners found it easier to obtain the privileges annexed to them in Pennsylvania than elsewhere; and because there are laws there for the gradual abolition of slavery, which neither of the two states above-mentioned have at present, but which nothing is more certain than that they must have, and at a period not remote."

Unfortunately the first President failed to give his active support to emancipation, and those laws were delayed for seventy years.

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The neighbors of Washington were, in some cases, of even greater social consideration than himself. Of the adjoining State he said :

"Within full view of Mount Vernon, separated therefrom by water only, is one of the most beautiful seats on the river for sale, but of greater magnitude than you seem to have contemplated. It is called Belvoir, and belonged to George William Fairfax, who, were he living, would now be Baron of Cameron, as his younger brother in this country (George William dying without issue) at present is, though he does not take upon himself the title."

The land of the neighborhood, at the time we have indicated, sold at a good price, for he says at Fairfax :

"A year or two ago, the price he fixed on the land, as I have been well informed, was thirty-three dollars and a third per acre."

In the lifetime of Washington, the slow and henceforth steady decay of Virginia lands began. His own cherished fields steadily declined after his death, and will not now, probably, bring as much per acre as when he died. His chief crops were wheat and tobacco, and these were very large,—so large that vessels sometimes came up the Potomac, took the tobacco and flour directly from his own wharf, a little below his deer-park, in front of his mansion, and carried them to England or the West Indies. So noted were these products for their quality, and so faithfully were they put up, that any flour bearing the brand of "George Washington, Mount Vernon," was said to have been exempted from the customary inspection in the British West India ports. Such was the home of Washington, where he spent the days of his private life, and his domestic enjoyments were of a dutiful rather than of an enthusiastic sort.

His mother lived until he was fifty-seven years old, but his father died when he was eleven. His wife was rich, but not accomplished, and he set free 124 slaves at his death. He always rose to the needs of history, and, if his household seems





to lack pathetic and feminine features, that is, perhaps, because he was never out of the public regard, because he had no children, and also, possibly, because he was unfortunate in all his early loves. There are half-a-dozen cases on record of his direct rejection by ladies to whom he proposed.

Bishop Meade, the devout and careful chronicler of Virginia, received the following note from one of the family of Fauntleroy :

“ My grandfather (who was called Colonel William Faunt Le Roy) was twice married. By the first wife he had one daughter (Elizabeth), who became the wife of Mr. Adams of James River, after having refused her hand to General George Washington.”

On this the Bishop remarked : “ It would seem from the foregoing, and from what may be read in my notice of Mr. Edward Ambler and his wife, and from what Mr. Irving and other writers have conjectured concerning Miss Grymes of Middlesex, and perhaps one other lady in the land, that General Washington, in his earlier days, was not a favorite with the ladies. If the family tradition respecting his repeated rejections be true,—for which I would not vouch,—it may be accounted for in several ways. He may have been too modest and diffident a young man to interest the ladies, or he was too poor at that time ; or he had not received a college or university education in England or Virginia ; or, as is most probable, God had reserved him for greater things,—was training him up in the camp for the defense of his country. An early marriage might have been injurious to his future usefulness.”

Much of his life was passed in camps, and in lonely surveys, and he made himself by acceptance, instead of choice, a rigid historical being. He was worth, during all his married life, about \$100,000 sterling, not counting his slaves as merchandise, and it paid him not above 3 or 4 per cent in money, or about \$20,000 per annum.

In this quiet, almost elegant home, he received many princes, exiles, and refined travelers, lured so far by the



report of his deeds and character. He disappointed not one of whom we have any record, and his neighbors, as well as those remote; forgot his austerities in his integrity. We could have placed no more composed and godlike character at the fountain of our young State; and his image, growing grander as the stream has expanded, is reflected yet in every ripple of the river. We have grown more Democratic since his time, and we often wish that Washington had been more pliable, popular, and affable; but it is to be remembered that he was a Republican, and not a Democrat. As one of his federalistic observers has said of his day:

“Democracy, as a theory, was not as yet. The habits and manners of the people were, indeed, essentially Democratic in their simplicity and equality of condition, but this might exist under any form of Government. Their Governments were then purely Republican. They had gone but a short way into those philosophical ideas which characterized the subsequent and real revolution in France. The great State papers of American liberty were all predicated on the abuse of chartered, not abstract rights.” (Note—Gibbs’ Life of Wolcott.)

As an original suggestor, Washington was wise, without genius. His designs were all bounded by law, the rights of others, and the intelligent prejudices of his time. He told Coke, the Methodist, that he was inimical to slavery. The better elements of our age were all intelligent, and growing in him. But the mighty whirlwind raised by Rousseau, and by Jefferson, blew upon the country, and we are what we are, while Washington and Lafayette, soldier and pupil, stand the only consistent great figures of the two hemispheres,—the last Republicans of the school of Milton and Hampden. Such as he was, there he lived, and the vestiges of the breaking up of the past are all round his honored mansion,—the key of the Bastille; his surveyor’s tripod, which first measured the streams beyond the Alleghanies, and, at last, the forts which the North planted against Virginia slavery.





The life of Washington at Mount Vernon, subsequent to the War, had been lived with that rigid method which he prescribed for himself at an early age. Temperate, yet not disdaining the beverage of a gentleman of that time, and dividing the day between clerical and out-of-door duties, he had escaped other diseases than those incident to camp-life, and he was not fond of the prolonged convivialities of the table. His breakfast hour was seven o'clock in summer, and eight in winter, and he dined at three. He always ate heartily, but he was no epicure. His usual beverage was small-beer or cider and Madeira wine. He took tea and toast, or a little well-baked bread early in the evening, conversed with or read to his family, when there were no guests, and usually, whether there was company or not, retired for the night at about nine o'clock.

He loved Mount Vernon, and had never expressed a desire to change its retirement for the concerns of a denser society; but the wish seems to have been fixed in his heart at an early period, to see the banks of the Potomac become the seat of a great city. Annapolis, Baltimore; and Fredericksburg, were each a stout day's journey from his estate, and Georgetown and Alexandria, were his post-office and market places. It had now been fifteen years since he had considered the subject of breaking his allegiance to his King and England, and fully half the time had been spent away from his estate.

During more than seven years of the war, Washington had visited his pleasant home upon the Potomac but once, and then only for three days and nights. Mrs. Washington spent the winter in camp with her husband, but generally returned to Mount Vernon during his campaigns.

From this mansion he had departed to take part in the first Continental Congress, as one of the four delegates from Virginia, when, in the language of a diligent historian, on Wednesday morning, the 31st of August, 1774, two men approaching Mount Vernon on horseback, came to accompany him. One of them was a slender man, very plainly dressed in a suit of minister's



gray, and about 40 years of age. The other was his senior in years, likewise of slender form, and a face remarkable for its expression of unclouded intelligence. He was more carefully dressed, more polished in manners, and much more fluent in conversation than his companion. They reached Mount Vernon at 7 o'clock, and after an exchange of salutations with Washington and his family, and partaking of breakfast, the three retired to the library, and were soon deeply absorbed in the discussion of the novel questions then agitating the people of the Colonies. The two travelers were Patrick Henry and Edmund Pendleton. A third, "the silver-tongued Cicero" of Virginia, Richard Henry Lee, was expected with them, but he had been detained at Chantilly, his seat in Westmoreland.

All day long these eminent Virginians were in council; and, early the next morning, they set out for Philadelphia on horseback, to meet the patriots from other Colonies, there. Will Lee, Washington's huntsman and favorite body-servant, was the only attendant upon Washington. They crossed the Potomac at the falls, (now Georgetown,) and rode far on toward Baltimore before the twilight. On the 4th of September, the day before the opening of the Congress, they breakfasted at Christina Ferry, (now Wilmington,) and dined at Chester; and that night Washington, according to his diary, "lodged at Dr. Shippen's in Philadelphia, after supping at the New Tavern." At that house of public entertainment, he had lodged nearly two years before, while on his way to New York, to place young Custis, his wife's son, in King's (now Columbia) College. With that journey in 1774, began the glorious period of this Virginia planter's career. Even at that date, he drew upon himself the admiration of the best of his contemporaries, and John Adams—now elected Vice-President with him—wrote to Elbridge Gerry—subsequently to be Vice-President with President Madison—this warm compliment in his favor:

"There is something charming to me in the conduct of Washington. A gentleman of one of the first fortunes upon the continent, leaving his delicious retirement, his family and friends,





sacrificing his ease, and hazarding all in the cause of his country! His views are noble and disinterested. He declared, when he accepted the mighty trust, that he would lay before us an exact account of his expenses, and not accept a shilling for pay."

The history of the war which speedily followed that first Congress is mainly the career of Washington. He was a persevering, a prudent, and a magnanimous captain, and his character grew round and lustrous as the independence of the country advanced. Foreign nobles, countries, and officers did him reverence, and his behavior was always modest, grave, and yet cheerful, so that he neither made enemies nor provoked severe analysis; and he set the example of obedience to the civil powers, so that his army graduated in the love of law; and their transition to citizens became as natural as his own to the First Magistracy. If he had not the military genius of Bonaparte, he had not also the love of blood and of violence in the same arbitrary degree. As has been well said, "war was to him only a means, always kept subordinate to the main and final object,—the success of the cause, the independence of the country." As a captain, he was subject to none of the petty and irritable jealousies so common with conquerors; and he saw, without chagrin and ill humor, the successes of his inferiors in command. Still more, he supplied them largely with the means and opportunity of gaining them. Only once was he tempted with the anonymous proffer of a crown, and he rebuked it; and the fomentor of the single conspiracy against him wrote in remorse, "you are, in my eyes, the great and good man."

When the armies disbanded, and he had bidden adieu to his companions and staff at New York, and delivered up his commission at Annapolis, he made one or two of those long journeys of which he was so fond, and which acquainted him so well with the needs and capacities of the future State, and then he sought the society of his wife and the congenial pursuits of agriculture. But one of his fame and large acquaintance could no more be permitted to dwell in solitude. For some time,





indeed, after his return to Mount Vernon, Washington was in a manner locked up by the ice and snow of an uncommonly rigorous winter, so that social intercourse was interrupted, and he could not even pay a visit of duty and affection to his aged mother at Fredericksburg. But it was enough for him at present that he was at length at home at Mount Vernon. Yet the habitudes of the camp still haunted him; he could hardly realize that he was free from military duties; on waking in the morning, he almost expected to hear the drum going its stirring rounds and beating the *reveille*.

As spring advanced, however, Mount Vernon, as had been anticipated, began to attract numerous visitors. They were received in the frank, unpretending style Washington had determined upon. It was said to be pleasant to behold how easily and contentedly he subsided from the authoritative Commander-in-Chief of armies, into the quiet country gentleman. There was nothing awkward or violent in the transition. Mrs. Washington, too, who had presided with quiet dignity at headquarters, and cheered the wintry gloom of Valley Forge with her presence, presided with equal amenity and grace at the simple board of Mount Vernon. She had a cheerful good sense, that always made her an agreeable companion, and was an excellent manager. She had been remarked for an inveterate habit of knitting. It had been acquired, or at least fostered, in the wintry encampments of the Revolution, where she used to set an example to her lady visitors by diligently applying her needles, knitting stockings for the destitute soldiery. While Washington was waited upon by scholars, inventors, suggestors, and people with projects of material, moral, and intellectual improvements,—and the two hundred folio volumes of his writings and correspondence attest how engaged he was for the five years between the peace and the Presidency,—his wife was busied with the care of her orphan grandchildren.

There was another female dear to the newly-elected President, and he kept her in filial remembrance at the very moment of his greatest promotion. It was growing late in the evening of



the day on which our chapter opens, when Washington mounted his horse, and, followed by his man Billy, rode off into the woods of Virginia with speed. His destination was Fredericksburg, nearly forty miles away, with two ferries between,—one at the Occoquan, the other at the Rappahannock. His purpose was to see his old mother, now over eighty years of age, and drawing near the grave. It had been long since he had visited her, but he could not feel equal to the responsibilities of his great office until he should receive her blessing. Few candidates for the Presidency in our day would leave a warm mansion, filled with congratulating friends, to ride all night through the chilly April mists, to say adieu to a very old woman. But thus piously the administration of Washington began. He passed old Pohick Church, of which he was a Vestryman,—soon to tumble to ruins,—crossed the roaring Occoquan, and by its deep and picturesque gorge, where passed the waters of the future bloody Bull Run, and, by night, he saw the old churches of Aquia and Potomac rise against the sky; he saw the decaying seaport of Dumfries. In the morning, he was at Fredericksburg, and his mother was in his arms. Marches, perils, victories, honors, powers, surrendered to that piteous look of helpless love, too deep for pride to show through its tears. And the President of the new State was to her a new-born babe again,—no dearer, no greater. He was just in time, for she had but the short season of summer to live, and, like many dying mothers, life seemed upheld; at four-score and five, by waiting love till he should come. History is ceremonious as to what passed between them, but the parting was solemn and touching, like the event.

“You will see me no more,” she said, “my great age and disease warn me that I shall not be long in this world. But go, George, to fulfil the destiny which Heaven appears to assign you. Go, my son, and may Heaven’s and your mother’s blessing be with you always.”

Passing from that dear, pathetic presence, the President elect, perhaps, did not hear the plaudits of the people in the

the first of these is the fact that the British Empire  
 was not a single entity, but a collection of separate  
 states, each with its own laws, customs, and  
 interests. The second is the fact that the British  
 Empire was not a static entity, but a dynamic one,  
 constantly changing and evolving. The third is the  
 fact that the British Empire was not a homogeneous  
 entity, but a heterogeneous one, composed of many  
 different peoples and cultures. The fourth is the  
 fact that the British Empire was not a benevolent  
 entity, but a selfish one, concerned only with its  
 own interests. The fifth is the fact that the British  
 Empire was not a just entity, but an unjust one,  
 based on the exploitation of the weak by the strong.  
 The sixth is the fact that the British Empire was  
 not a peaceful entity, but a violent one, engaged  
 in constant wars and conflicts. The seventh is the  
 fact that the British Empire was not a democratic  
 entity, but a despotic one, ruled by a few  
 powerful men. The eighth is the fact that the  
 British Empire was not a progressive entity, but  
 a conservative one, clinging to old traditions and  
 ways of thinking. The ninth is the fact that the  
 British Empire was not a united entity, but a  
 divided one, with many internal conflicts and  
 rivalries. The tenth is the fact that the British  
 Empire was not a lasting entity, but a temporary  
 one, destined to fall and be replaced by a new  
 world order.



streets of Fredericksburg. He rode all day by the road he had come, and reached Mount Vernon before evening, having exhibited his power of endurance at the age of 57, by riding eighty miles in twenty-four hours.

His good wife had made all ready ; the equipage and baggage were at the door next morning ; and, leaving Mrs. Washington and most of the household behind, he set out for New York at 10 o'clock on Thursday, the 16th of April, accompanied by Thorapson and Humphreys. The new State was waiting anxiously for its Magistrate.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

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### THE DUELING GROUND AT BLADENSBURG, AND THE GREAT DUELS THERE.

My first visit to Bladensburg was made in 1868. I walked out from Washington city with a newspaper friend to see the dueling ground. Four miles carried us through the recently raised and dismantled breastworks. Then we passed the District line, where it runs through the cool and cedary lawn of John C. Rives, of the Washington *Globe*, putting his barn in Columbia, his house in Maryland. Here, under a maple tree, we saw old Commodore Barney's spring, where he drank when wounded at the battle of Bladensburg; across the road the old salt had planted his battery; the road descended to the creek and ravine, where a bridge, about as long as your parlor floor, gave crossing, and on the Washington side of the bridge, at a bare, grassy dip, in the meadow, Decatur and many a man, as vain and brave, fell, pistol in hand. It was the dueling ground.

From a little knoll beyond the bridge, we looked upon the village of Bladensburg, and the slope of battle-field that gently fell from our feet, to the little sandy running river. The whole area of the original battle was not half a mile square, Barney's combat being a separate matter, fought on the third reserve line. Just by Bladensburg, whose old crook-gabled houses came nearly to the water's edge, we saw the new bridge reaching out towards us, and a few yards below it, the broken abutments and piles of the old battle bridge. The new bridge was



about fifty yards long, the old one not more than thirty yards. In less than two minutes a man on a run could cross either.

Bladensburg itself we could see to be a village built along two roads, which forked off at the other end of the bridge, one by the stream's bank northward to Baltimore, the other keeping straight east to Benedict, on the Patuxent river. The course of the river was away from the village, south-westward. The village contained about three hundred people. The river was a shallow creek, now fordable everywhere, except after a rain, and running over sands and pebbles. A flat lay on each side of it, with bushes and stout old gum and ash trees growing therein; the village also lay on this flat, so low that after every rain-storm the people go muskrating around their back yards. Hills lie on each side of the flat, and the river escapes through dogwood and shell-bark thickets. Desolation was Bladensburg to look at, and low-lived wickedness to know.

It stands on the border of the great Calvert property. The house of George Calvert, lineal descendant of Lord Baltimore, the founder of Maryland, is only two miles out of the village on the Baltimore side,—a white mansion a hundred feet long, with wings and lofty portico, standing in an estate of two thousand acres, much of which is a spacious lawn, guarded by the porter's lodges, in the English style, and stocked with white deer, by George Calvert, more than sixty years ago.

The old stage coaches, up to the railway era, used to go daily from Washington to Baltimore, through Bladensburg,—through fare two dollars and a-half in gold,—and in that period the town was called thriving. To see the Northern Congressmen and their wives go by, the young tobacco planters used to gather, and while waiting for the stage they fought chickens and dogs, or gambled in a bar-room.

Then this poor abandoned creek was a river, and boats of light draught came up to the piers of the old bridge and "loaded" with tobacco. Money was paid down on the spot for the virgin leaf, and rum and nigger-driving stood on their deck of cards and thought it was a civilization. But steam, like a bel-





of lightning, struck this cross-roads Sodom. The railway left it to one side, and then the land, when it was ploughed for corn and wheat, ran off with the rains and filled up the river. No masted boat has been seen at Bladensburg for eighty years. Of course the merchants subsided into retailers of candles and chicory. The very old houses grew older with poverty. Had it not been for a chalybeate spring just above the town it would have been totally forsaken. This Spring brought now and then an idle carriage load of ladies to taste the water, and as the village laid just over the district line, dueling parties of politicians came now and then to put up their horses before they aimed at each other's hearts. The young planters lurking around the taverns to see these, became mere gamblers and debaters by profession at last. The nigger and tobacco had their revenge. I doubt that any miserable village in the country is so blasted with ignorance and wickedness as this. Blood, taken in colder blood, cries out and against it. Not one, but three different sites of duels, lie in its environs. The battle of 1814, that might have dignified the place, seemed to feel the loathsome future of it, and the troops lost heart, and ran like cravens. Yet, near the place, was born the Attorney-General and biographer of Patrick Henry, Mr. William Wirt. "Happily, he moved away!" said my companion, as we crossed the plank bridge.

Going up into the town—under great, elephant-backed roofs of over-lapping, octagonal-shaped shingles, where monstrously huge chimneys, perhaps of imported brick, buttressed up the gables, by lazy porticoes to private homes where green benches invited to a dreary rest, by dogs pursuing pigs in sheer maliciousness, and brutal roosters crowing at the sport, by signs that flapped for unreturning customers, and by negro kitchens in the rear of every dwelling, with open colonnades of brick between, by one sandy, sunny, parched street—we passed the sign-board of the deserted "Exchange Hotel," and came to the sign of "The Branch Hotel," where Mr. Sutor, proprietor, stood in the act of chucking his jack-knife into his own gable. Near by



were hitching sheds and stables for traveling carriages that come no more. Within was a bar, decorated with two nude studies of almond-eyed females, and the valuable portrait of Mr. John Surratt, a young gentlemen who murdered a tyrant and gave his own mother up to be hanged. Mr. Sutor, of whom I had heard before, was at this time regaling a couple of young gentlemen with a humorous depiction of General Butler stealing "spoons," although he called them "spunes." The bar-keeper was thus addressing a young gentleman who walked to and fro: "Latherby, you mousn't take yer hists so airly in the mornin'. The black Jack man'll git ye agin."

This playful remark I interpreted to mean that Mr. Latherby was just getting over a spell of *delirium tremens*.

However, after some difficulty in getting Mr. Sutor off the spoon question, which could only be done by allowing him to curse General Butler for five minutes uninterruptedly, he said with that familiar leer which implies social "cleverness" in Maryland, that he had seen many a "juel," had fed many a "jueling" party, and that wounds had been dressed and limbs amputated frequently in his parlors. There were persons older than himself, he modestly added, living in town, who had seen the most famous duels of them all, and he indicated a druggist across the way who was present at the celebrated Graves and Cilley combat.

I asked to be given some of the scenes cotemporary with these actions.

"Oh!" said Mr. Sutor, "the seconds and very often the principals used to come out yer the night befo' the juel, with their friends, and have a high ole Kerouse up stairs. Mos' all of 'em got ripe and drunk befo' daylight, and some of 'em overslep 'emselves, so they couldn't see no juel at all."

Here Mr. Sutor laughed very loudly. His friends laughed. All laughed.

"They never told us, of course, about the juel; but we allus knowed it. We could tell. We'd see 'em walk behind the





house and slip across the bridge and, of course, we didn't see nothing. Oh! no. Neither did *he* see them spunes!"

Here there was an exhilarating laugh all round.

A friend of Mr. Sutor now interpolated some interjective contempt for certain Methodists of the Bladensburg region, who had tried to stop duelling on their side of the district-line even by force. He said they were darcued interneddlers, and didn't like fun no-how.

"They got no ijee of a gentleman's quarrel. They want to go to law on a question of honor."

"They want them spunes!" said Mr. Sutor, to his own great merriment.

"I tell you, gentlemen," said Mr. Sutor, breaking off, "Bladensburg's the only complete town in the United States. It's all yer. It aint got many spunes, but it's a complete town."

(Mr. Sutor meant to rest upon the fact that Bladensburg had ceased to grow.)

At this time there were indications that our new acquaintances wanted less talk and more treating. Insinuations were made that a game of gallop, sledge, or draw poker would improve the spirit. While declining these hospitable invitations we saw one of the young Calverts (called here Caulverts) riding by on a fine blooded horse. They are capable, recluse farmers, and I believe, have eschewed the religion of their fathers, being now hardshell Episcopalians.

A last effort to induce Mr. Sutor to give us his reminiscences of the Battle of Bladensburg developed a certain memory of Mr. Sutor having been sent by his father to drive home a certain pig, and while on the way, a desperate shower came down, which Mr. Sutor remembered to have "spiled" a certain alpaca jacket that he wore. This alpaca jacket was a very fine piece of material, being furnished with a peculiarly handsome and nondescript gilt button. But what all these pigs, jackets, rain storms and buttons had to do with the Battle of Bladensburg was still a matter of mystery when we bade Mr. Sutor good-bye.



"I say!" said Mr. Sutor, when we got down the street a piece, halloing, "You won't try your luck at keyard's?"

"No! thank you!"

"And you won't forget them spunes?"

We went gladly out of this manner of village to the old dueling ground, very silent and uncommemorated, with a new hill-top fort looking over into it, and sat there, reflectively thinking over the barbaric years when the vanished master was the type of manliness.

A few remembered incidents stood prominently out.

Jonathan Dayton, Senator from New Jersey, challenged the great De Witt Clinton, Senator from New York, to fight him in 1803. Clinton apologized.

In 1819, just over the district line in Maryland, General Armistead T. Mason, Senator from Virginia, was shot dead by John M. McCarty, his cousin, in a duel with muskets and ball. They stood only ten feet apart. Mason deserved his death, and so did McCarty. They first challenged each other to fight at three feet, then at three inches, and, at last, to sit on a powder barrel and blow each other up.

In 1820, in the month of March, Stephen Decatur was shot dead on this old Bladensburg cockpit, by James Barron, a fellow officer. They stood eight paces apart.

A baser duel was that of Fox and Randall, the latter a Treasury Clerk, who seduced the daughter of his Washington boarding-house keeper in 1821, and then challenging her pitying friend to fight at eight paces, killed him instantly.

These bloody deeds are little in vogue to-day, since they stopped the sale of niggers, and cooled honor down with a little wholesome poverty.

Henry Clay's celebrated duel with Randolph occurred in Virginia, above Chain Bridge, at the base of one of the strong earth forts erected in the late war. On the site of the combat thousands of men have since encamped. It is about nine miles from Washington. Clay had previously fought with Humphrey Marshall in 1808. Randolph was a novice at this

the first of these was the fact that the United States had no standing army at the time of the Revolution. The only military force was the militia, which was composed of the able-bodied men of each state.

The second of these was the fact that the United States had no navy. The only naval force was the Continental Navy, which was established in 1775. It was composed of a few ships, which were built and manned by the states.

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meeting, which occurred in 1826. The latter was a singular piece of talent and vanity, nearly a madman, and intelligible only in Virginia. He annoyed Clay, who was Secretary of State, by repeatedly attacking the latter from the Senate, styling him a blackleg, and charging him with a diplomatic forgery. Randolph spent the night before the duel in quoting poetry and playing whist, while his will was being amended.

The next morning, before going to the field, he got nine pieces out of bank to make gold seals for his friends, and carried them to the ground in his breeches pockets. His pistol went off by accident, but at the real interchange of shots he fired in the air. Clay took aim at him. Years afterward Randolph had the gold seals made, with coats of arms upon them. There was a good deal of Kentucky and Virginia blatherskite written about this duel. Clay made a fine figure in it, seeming to feel regret and intrepidity together as he stood up. For the most extended description, see "Benton's Thirty Years in the Senate."

The fourth duel of consequence in this country—outranked in character only by the deaths of Hamilton, Decatur, and Broderick—was fought between Jonathan Cilley of Maine, and W. T. Graves of Kentucky, four miles from Bladensburg, on the river road, in 1838. The weapons were rifles, the distance was ninety-two yards. Henry A. Wise was the second of Graves. Cilley was put in a place where the February wind blew keenly on him. They both fired twice and missed. After each fire Cilley apologized in a manly way, but would not humiliate himself. On the third fire, Cilley fell, shot through the body, and died in three minutes. There were present at this duel, Crittenden (Compromiser) and Menefee of Kentucky, Duncan of Ohio, and Bynum of North Carolina. Jones of Wisconsin seconded Cilley. Calhoun and Hawes of Kentucky were also present. All these were members of Congress. Other spectators were two uninvited men, named Powell and Brown, and the hack drivers.

The duel was barbarous in all its associations. Cilley had





offended J. Watson Webb, editor of the defunct *Courier and Enquirer* of New York, in debate, and Graves was one of a party of fire-eaters who challenged Cilley because the latter would not admit that Webb, his principal, was a man of honor. While Graves and Cilley were fighting, Webb and another party were scouring the country for them, determined to mutilate or kill Cilley any way. The record left by the whole Webb and Graves party in this duel,—for which I refer you to Lorenzo Sabine's *Notes on Duels and Dueling*,—is one of persecution and murder. The event inflamed the country, and led to the first decided stand taken by the North against the atrocious principles of the dueling code.

The next duel of note near Washington was an interchange of shots between one Edward Stanley of North Carolina, and one Samuel W. Inge of Alabama, Congressmen. The former said, in debate, that the latter had little sense and less charity. Then they called each other blackguards, and both were probably correct.

In 1852, John Barney of Baltimore, tried to get Mons. Sarriges, the French Minister, to fight him near the city.

Two Richmond editors fought at Bladensburg, bloodlessly, in 1852. They were both named Johnson.

John C. Breckinridge avoided a duel with F. B. Cutting of New York, by apologizing, in 1854.

To this imperfect list of duels, there is only one index of character: Vindictive vanity. The last single combat in the Capital city was Payne stabbing the sick Seward in his bed of helplessness, and Booth revenging himself on Lincoln's mortality. Both these heroic affairs of honor were sequels to the braining of Charles Sumner by the honored son of South Carolina. They end that race of high motive, of sensitive courage, and of cavaliers of which Bladensburg, as it stands, would be properly the capital and the cemetery.

I paid a very remarkable visit to Bladensburg in 1870, to ascertain some particulars of the death of Stephen Decatur. My inquiries excited an accommodating spirit, and I soon heard the barkeeper cry out:



"Yer's the man that saw Decatur shot!" said the barkeeper.

I turned from my supper of fresh herring, caught; "juss yer behine de tavern in de branch," and from my roes of fresh shad, to look at the man who saw Decatur shot.

He was a lean, liver-hired old loafer of the village of Bladensburg. His kidneys were all dissolved in burning whiskey. He wore a wide slouched hat, poor clothes, the boots of a gentleman, worn through and patched as frequently as the patches in his credit, the gaps in his character. There was a cane in his hand, of course, the rake's last sceptre. He looked at me with a twinkle of amiability, and a sidewise expression of thirst.

"I saw Commodore Decatur mortally wounded, sir. It was on the 22d of March, 1820, sir—forty-nine years ago. My God! how time flies. Yes, sir; I'll jine you with a little tansy."

The old man took off his hat and balanced it on the end of his stick, and leaned it against the whitewashed wall. Then he took all his liquor, and asked if I was from the North.

Marylander! And from Worcester County? Why, that's the gitting-off place," exclaimed the old Bladensburger to my answer. And now I know why you take an interest in Decatur's juel; for Stephen Decatur was born in Sinepuxent Bay, Worcester County, Maryland, ninety years ago. That little peninsula of Delaware and Maryland [he called it Maalun], called the Easters sho', has produced some of our biggest naval heroes—Decatur, MacDonough, the Goldsboroughs, Dupont. And two of 'em were of French descent. Decatur's grandfather was a French midshipman from La Rochelle, the last stronghold of the Huguenots, who cruised to the West Indies, took the yellow fever, and was sent to Newport, R. I., to git well. But he fell in love with Prissy Hill there, quit the navy of King Louis XV., and, entering our merchant service, died soon, poor in Philadelphia. His only son Stephen went to sea, married Miss Pine, an Irish girl, became a naval officer, and a privateersman in the revolution, and while he was off fighting





the English, the British army entered Philadelphia; his wife moved down to Sinepuxent Bay, where Stephen Decatur, the first son, was born. He had the three big crosses in him, sir, French, Irish, and—

“Yankee?”

“Yes, sir!” said the old Bladensburger, “but the Rhode Island Yankee was driven out of New England proper, and it is a better breed. We had some hope to see Mr. Sprague, of Rhode Island, out on our jueling ground. But I’m afraid I have seen my last affair of honor.”

“How old are you, may I ask?”

“I am 61 years, sir. Sometimes I think I remember the battle of Bladensburg, but they tell me that’s only an idea. But when Decatur was shot I was 12 years old. We knew there was boun’ to be a juel by gentlemen with a naval look to ’em, who stopped at our tavern over night. That’s the way she always did, sir. One party would come from Baltimore-way and put up yer all night in Bladensburg. The opposite party would drive out from Washington after daylight next day, and meet the Bladensburg party in the gully, half a mile toward Washington. There they’d fight, and cross the Destreck line right afterward to avoid arrest. We boys cut our eyes when we saw strangers round town late. Next morning, you’ll be bound, we was up and hiding in the trees or bushes along the edge of the gully. It was Barron’s party, sir, that stayed in Bladensburg that night. At a gentleman’s house, near by, I have heard that some of Decatur’s family put up, to be timely on hand after the shots were fired. There were a thousand stories flying round after the fight, about those minor matters. I only know what I saw and was informed.”

I thought to myself how true it was, indeed, that what passes perishes, at least to the curiosity. This old parasite and ghoul of manslaughter had only expressed in another way the apology of Mackenzie to his life of Decatur, that: “The search for truth, however sincere, does not always result in its being



found. Experience proves that contemporary history is quite as fallible as that of the past."

I lighted my pipe and purchased for this old-man guide a paper of tinfoil tobacco. He entered into some little apology upon his fallen condition.

"We're down to labul pore in Bladensburg these days, sir. They took two things from us, sir, that would ruin any people—our river and our niggers. They give us a railroad, and that busted us completely. Bladensburg stood before Georgetown or Washington were thought of, sir. It was called Garrison's Landing as far back as the year 1700. People round here live to this day who can remember vessels clearing from the foot of this street for the West Indies and for Liverpool. Then the Capital was established close by us, and stages ran through to Baltimore, to the number of thirty or forty a day. Meanwhile the river began to get shallower every year till our port was broken up; for the soil hereabouts runs off or wears into deep gulleys, and we hadn't the Northern knowledge to make it stay. What we lost off our land filled up our river. Then the railroad was laid thirty years ago, and it broke up the briskness of our way travel. Finally, when the land was so pore that it wouldn't keep a nigger, superfluous bad luck to even our niggers. And, between you and me, sir, as Marylanders, the niggers ain't certainly no wuss off than they was, and we are wuss off every way. I'll take some gin, if you're agreeable."

At this time my carriage came up, and, after going through the hotel, I made the complete circuit of the village.

This celebrated tavern is a frame building, with a lawn in the rear, a front porch, a bar-room at the end, and the bar-room gives access to a stableyard, which is open on the side next the street, and has hitching stalls set round about.

At the present day this tavern is the undisputed Capitol of Bladensburg, and Bladensburg is the worst town possibly in the United States. There are more desperate and more mer-





ernary towns on the verge of human exile, but I should say that Bladensburg at the present time is altogether the most heathen place we have. At night this tavern and its rival across the street are filled with relics of barbarism; poor wretches who will fight upon a word and cheat without a need, debased at all points except upon the solitary imputation of cowardice. It is saturated with that blood-thirstiness and thirstiness otherwise, which calls and follows to "the field." Its proudest recollection is that it was the picked place for mortal combat, and yet it was the scene of the most cowardly battle ever fought on the American Continent, a battle wherein a few British sailors and soldiers slew the militia of all this countryside as they ran like dogs, leaving on their flank the Capital of the country to be burned and the President of the country to be captured. And in the environs of this wretched place the bravest and handsomest officer in our navy—"the Bayard of the seas," as he was not inaptly called—fell almost a carcass in the dirt, with a ball in his bowels and his ball in his adversary's hip.

At this day Bladensburg is in essentials the same village it was when Decatur and Barron fought here on a morning in March, 1820—a roadside village of three or four hundred people at the crossing of the East Branch of the Potomac, five miles from the Capitol at Washington. Its principal street stretches along a flat floor of sand, thirsty, like its citizens, and is, at both ends, stopped by a ford and bridge; for the branch makes a turn round the bottom of the village, and shoots off a creek round the top of it. The main turnpike street, therefore, on which our old duelists' tavern stands, midway between the fords—is a good deal like a village built upon a sand bar or river beach. The backyard of those houses which keep the same side with the tavern go flatly back to the river. The yards of houses across the street scramble up at a small degree. Behind these latter houses is another broken street, parallel to the first, and both of them at the bottom of the town lead into a street at right angles, which passes the branch





by a bridge one way, and the other way leads back through the hills into the Chesapeake Necks of Maryland. It was by this last road that the British came from their ship at Benedict to burn Washington. There are hills on that side of the town, and behind them the British formed. Then, charging across the old bridge, or shipping up under cover of those old houses, they passed the branch, formed on the Washington side of the river, and that night moved into Washington. The back lanes of this town, and the houses which lie up the green hill-terraces, show large and comfortable yet. The flat main street smells of the ague, feels of the rheumatism, and looks of starvation. Its grave, hip-roofed, blackened old houses, look in the twilight like rows of wrecked hulks along a bar when the tide has gone out. In the baking sunshine of the day they look like tawny elephants, waiting in two lines to carry up the vast delay of cargoes which nevermore shall come to Bladensburg piers. Mighty outside chimneys hold themselves and their old houses up. The porches hang limp, like the dislocated chins of dead men. There are no sidewalks. No wagon moves oftener than once an hour through these old waiting rows of mansions. There is a shop or two, but the merchant lolls in the door and looks where the river used to be for the unreturning ships. I have sometimes thought of the perils of towns pitched in the sea, but woe be to the towns which the sea deserts, once having fondled them. I never felt the sense of isolation in Venice or in Rotterdam, where the water plashes against one's house like the sea against his vessel. But in this little village, which has lost its river, there seems to have been a superstition of bad luck, and the curse came ever since the tide forsook it. I felt this myself when I heard of the river going away, and I said to my acquaintance, the guide: "By the rivers of Babylon we wept."

I have read a poem about the Deserted Village, but I should call this the "Abandoned Village."

"There was a sossy Methodist preacher here," replied the old man, "who undertook to say, just after the war, that our



people and town were abandoned. He said the jueling ground had been the academy of our boys and the tavern their pump. I tell you, sir, between us, as Marylanders, that jueling ground has been bad for a good many of us. Strangers come to see it. It's the sight and park of the village. It fills our boys' heads with ideas of taking the chances, and handling weapons, and resenting insults. As they can't juel no more, they fight cocks behind the tavern now, and skin a stranger, if he comes along, with a game of cards. A standing gibbet or gallows couldn't have been wuss for us than that jueling ground. . . . It'll haunt this neighborhood for ever. The niggers are afraid to pass it after night. And do you know," the old man dropped his voice, "that when I look at our ships gone, the sea gone that fetched 'em here, and nothing left but this little bloody branch, I feel that you old jueling ground is somehow at the bottom of it."

The old man looked as if a chill out of the swampy street had struck him. I felt a little shiver of it myself.

"For look you, sir," he said, "at the bad luck that has come to us since the year 1800, when that little gully, half a mile from the village, became a human cockpit. (The first man known to have been killed there was Hopkins, in 1814, but it was a place of jueling almost as early as Washington became the Capital, and army and navy and politicians, all high-strung, got to be our neighbors). First we lose our ships. Then we lose our water, and our wharves stand high and dry on land, so that a duck can't turn where a brig used to anchor. Then we lose our good name; for the British army turns Washington in the rear, and makes us a rampart to cover their operations. Right over the jueling ground, the Field of Honor, our militia cut dirt, and Bladensburg is held accountable for the sacking of the Capital. No run of good luck begins. We lose the stage coaches. The soil gits poor. Our mineral spring that's got no superior in the Middle States, attracts nobody. The boys grow up bad. Upon my soul, it can hardly be called a calamity that our niggers are 'maniculated.'"





“ My Bladensburg friend, it is just eighty years since William Pinkney, of Annapolis, described Bladensburg at the present day in these words : Never will your country be productive ; never will its agriculture, its commerce, or its manufactures flourish so long as they are dependent upon reluctant bondsmen for their progress. Even the very earth itself, as Montesquieu says, which seems profusion under the cultivating hand of the freedom laborer, shrinks into barrenness from the contaminating sweat of a slave.”

We passed, so speaking, the tumble-down stores, saw vestiges of the ancient piers and bridge, crossed the new bridge in the early evening, and saw negroes bare to the thighs, wading in the pools with herring nets, plashing the surface meantime with rods, to drive the herring in. Beyond the bridge the road, by rising undulations, went towards Washington—a hard clay road, fenced on either side ; to the left, ran meadows down to the sedgy brink of the river ; on the right was a mill, and further on a handsome farm and barns. Half a mile from the bridge, the road dipped slightly to pass a small stone bridge, of one arch. Beneath this bridge a brook, nearly dry, had washed a gulch in the clay, to the depth of eight or ten feet, and this gulch crossed the road obliquely, washing out the fields to the same depth on either side. The gulch was twelve feet wide, and to prevent it from carrying off the bridge, heavy piles were driven at both ends of this structure. Gulches or “ washes ” like this account for the bold landscapes and barren soils round Washington, and it is the opinion of Mr. Hilgarde, of the Coast Survey, that the whole Chesapeake Basin is slowly filling up.

There is no name for the brook which once ran across, not under, the road, and was a clear or a muddy stream, as the weather might permit. In those days there was no deep ditch, as at present, but the brook flowed down a narrow, grassy valley, which still meanders through the rolling fields by long and graceful curves. A piece of dry marsh, it might be called, winding through hills, and concealed from observation except



from the ends. The passenger on the railroad can look down the whole length of it now as he rides by, and in some Summers he will see cattle grazing in it, in others he will find it planted with Indian corn or buckwheat.

This is the famous dueling ground of Bladensburg. I descended from the road and stood on the spot where Decatur fell, and in no direction could I see any building, except the tip of a barn-gable, across the East Branch, three quarters of a mile distant.

"When Commodore Decatur fell yer, in 1820," said the eye-witness, "there were trees masking this gully from the road, and many trees and bushes growing along its banks. The gully itself was clear and grassy as you see it to-day. In a carriage passing along the road, you couldn't have known anybody to be near by. I was a boy, and remember well; for these things made an impression on me, and I sneaked into the bushes and saw the duel happen."

Before six o'clock in the morning, on the 22d day of March, 1820, Commodore Stephen Decatur rose from the side of his wife and put on his citizen's clothes. She was used to parting with him, for in their fourteen years of married life, he had gone many times to sea and to battle. He crept softly down the stairs, and, passing through his spacious hall, encountered only his old negro servant, the companion of his voyages, who was alert and acquainted with the purposes of the day.

The old man had thrown open the windows of the drawing-room, and round the walls Decatur saw the trophies and illustrations of his life; his portraits and the paintings of his most celebrated battles; gold medals and gold swords, the gifts of Congressmen and admiring cities; articles of virtuoso, and bits of oriental furniture, purchased or captured in ports of Barbary or on the civilized seas. In Washington City there was no more spacious or excellent mansion than his, the President's house excepted; and this is demonstrable to the present day, where it stands upon the west corner of H street and Lafayette Square—a large brick mansion, worthy to be a Republican gen-





tleman's residence in any generation. He had himself built it a few years before out of prize money received from captures, and it was the second house he had owned in Washington, the first being one of the "Seven Sisters," so-called, three squares farther out Pennsylvania Avenue.

Decatur had always been in easy, almost luxurious circumstances. His father was a rich merchant and distinguished naval officer; his blood and name were good; he had been a child of fortune beyond almost any experience in American history, and he was now in the height of that popularity, chivalrous spirit and manly beauty, in which no American naval officer has supplanted him to this day.

With a military cloak around him, he strode out of his door and down the short block to the Avenue, passed the White House where President Monroe lay asleep, and crossing the empty lot where the Treasury has since been established, walked directly toward the Capitol, by the Mansion House (on the site of Willard's), by the "Indian Queen" (Brown's), and all the way the imperfect sidewalks were lined with tall poplar trees, the freak of Mr. Jefferson, and through their broken aisle he could see the unfinished Capitol, surrounded by scaffolds, dominating its picturesque hill. Thirty thousand people comprised the citizens; the streets were sparsely lined with houses; the walking on the slopes of Capitol Hill was bad as it possibly could be; nobody was alert, and in the freshening silence of the morning, Commodore Decatur, forty-one years of age, had plenty of stimulation to make a retrospect of his life, and to examine his present intentions.

He was within three hours to meet his ranking officer, Commodore James Barron, in a duel, the twain to stand eight yards apart, and fire at each other with pistols. The challenge had been accepted, and the arrangements made two weeks before, on board the ship-of-the-line Columbus, the ship which Barron wished to command, but which Bainbridge, Decatur's second, had obtained. As she had lain in deep water of St. Mary's, in the Potomac River, getting ready for sea, Captain Elliott



came aboard, on the anniversary of Decatur's wedding, and the time, place, distance, and weapons were solemnly selected.

Dueling with Stephen Decatur had been partly pastime, in part a passion. He had written some sentiments to the contrary, but his life disproved them. We have perhaps never had an example in America, certainly never in the North, of a family so conspicuous in dueling as Decatur's. His house was already the home of the widow and orphans of his brother-in-law, James McKnight, shot dead at Leghorn, eighteen years before, in a duel with a fellow-officer. Only eighteen months prior to the present impending duel, Decatur had been second to Oliver Perry, in a duel in New Jersey. In 1803, Decatur had compelled a duel at four yards between Midshipman Bainbridge, a relative of his present second, and an English duelist, wherein the latter was killed. At school, Decatur was the physical champion, and at the age of twenty he fought a duel by his father's advice, at Newcastle, Delaware, with a merchantman's mate, badly wounding the latter in the hip. Two years afterward, he made the Spanish naval officers in the harbor of Barcelona feel the presence of his high spirit. In the war of 1812, he sent a challenge for a duel between American and English frigates. At last he is to enter the lists in a combat of long and bitter fomentation, and its eventfulness marks the complexion of his thoughts. The man whom Decatur was to meet had been a disgraced and saddened fellow-officer. Nearly thirteen years before, a trusted and accomplished sailor, he had set sail in the frigate *Chesapeake*, from Hampton Roads, in the sight of Decatur and a fleet assembled there. It was in the time of peace, five years preceding the war of 1812, and Barron's flagship, without a gun ready for service, was suddenly boarded on the ocean by a boat from the British ship *Leopard*, whose commander demanded three British sailors to be given up. Barron refused to deliver them. The *Leopard* opened fire upon the helpless *Chesapeake*, and after killing and wounding many of her men, boarded her and seized the sailors.

This act set the country afire. The Administration, unwilling





to go to war, offered up a victim to the people in Commodore Barron, but his conduct had been so brave and sailor-like that the court martial could only convict him upon his misfortunes; and because his ship was not ready for action, he was sentenced to be suspended five years without pay. Decatur took the leading part in this prosecution of Barron, and in and out of court denounced him. It was a time of popular or party rage, like our recent impeachment trial, and Barron had few defenders, so that whoever put himself at the head of the persecution became the idol of the hour, and this man was Decatur. Supported by the baneful passions of the populace, Decatur grew very zealous in his opposition to Barron, and no doubt, in his fervor, believed that he was right.

Barron went abroad in the merchant service to earn his bread. He had struck the ebb-tide, which never turned till the day of his death. Decatur took Barron's ship and hoisted his Commodore's pennant. The war with the British came on during Barron's exile, and Decatur, who had struck the flood, went buoyantly up from victory to victory, and Barron found him, on the latter's return in 1818, a Commissioner of the Navy, rich, young, handsome and chivalrous.

The study of public feeling toward public men is not often so painful as we find it in this case. Every glory achieved by Decatur had given him a more gracious and historic bearing. Every anguish endured by Barron had made him sad, morose, and uncompanionable. The one man, out of his great injustice, suspected everybody. His themes of talk were his personal griefs. He went about asking for sympathy. Decatur carried an open countenance and a liberal hand. His chivalrous spirit compelled all homage which was not voluntary. And his themes of talk were epic and healthy; so that his company was coveted everywhere.

About a year before the duel, Barron—who was a Virginian from Hampton, and, like Decatur, the son of a gallant officer—made application for active service, and some newspaper paragraphs guessed that he wanted the fine ship *Columbus*, and the command of the Mediterranean squadron.



All pride of consistency stimulated Decatur to resist Barron's request. He was readily joined by Porter and Rodgers, his two fellow-Commissioners, and the ship was given to Bainbridge, whom Decatur had rescued from the dangerous Tripoli. By this time the unreliable public pulse beat equally with regard to Barron, and had the latter not challenged and killed his persecutor, it is probable that Decatur's pride of vindictiveness would have returned upon himself.

This is written after what I think to be thorough and just inquiry and research. There is a period which elapses after the death of any hero; when he passes out of patriotic into historic estimate. By the light, and by the right, of Time, therefore, I believe that Decatur's renewed pursuit of Barron, which was the cause of this duel, is a shadow upon a life else perfectly gallant. He circulated gossip about Barron's position in exile, put stigmas upon his courage, and said that "his conduct ought to forever bar his readmission to the service." Informers going from one to the other, enlarged and envenomed these sentences. At last Barron, stung to despair, sent a letter to Decatur asking if he said that "you (Decatur) could insult me with impunity."

Then followed a long correspondence, maintained by Decatur with exasperating coolness, and by Barron with irritated entreaty. Barron's object was to have a chance to resume the world anew. So far from imitating the cool malignity of Burr, when, resolved upon the death of Hamilton, he wished to avoid the duel, and there are indications that Barron was himself, if not under the magnetism of Decatur's brilliant deeds, at least aware of the almost entire hopelessness either of escaping his bullet, or of standing acquitted in public opinion if Decatur should be killed.

The combat had to come, and Commodore Decatur, walking up Pennsylvania Avenue with his will in his pocket, had reason to reflect upon the causes and the result of it. Come out as it might, had he anything to gain by it, in popularity, in duty, or in fortune—he who stood so high already, fighting with poor





Barron who stood so low? Barron was older by ten years, an invalid, near-sighted, no hand with the pistol; yet, the distance was close; an officer could scarcely miss; both might fall. But, pshaw! what right had a professional warrior to consider death. Yet, glory—the sole intellectual object of Decatur's life, how would his death in a duel affect his fame? Here we may imagine the mind of Decatur going over his correspondence with Barron.

*Decatur.* "Your motives are a matter of perfect indifference to me!"

*Barron.* "I had concluded that your rancor towards me was fully satisfied by the cruel and unmerited sentence of the Court of which you were a member. After an exile of seven years from my country, family, and friends, I hoped you would suffer my lacerated feelings to remain in quiet possession of these enjoyments."

*Decatur.* "My skill in the use of the pistol exists more in your imagination than in the reality."

*Barron.* "You have hunted me out, have persecuted me with all the power and influence of your office, for what other motive than to obtain my rank, I know not."

*Decatur.* "Your offering your life to me would be quite affecting and might (as you evidently intend) excite sympathy if it were not ridiculous."

*Barron.* "You know not such a feeling as sympathy. I cannot be accused of making the attempt to excite it."

With these and similar of the more vivid and bitter passages of their correspondence rising in his mind, Decatur had climbed the Capitol Hill and come to the door of Beale's Hotel. Within were Commodore Bainbridge and Mr. Samuel Hambleton. Breakfast was ready and they sat down together. Decatur was gravely talkative, absent at times, and he spoke of his will, unsigned in his pocket, which he said might be signed upon the field. He spoke somewhat of Barron. Said he should be sorry to kill him, and yet speculated as to where he should hit him. By the time breakfast was finished, a carriage, ordered



by Bainbridge, came to the door, and at a quarter past eight o'clock, the people meanwhile stirring out of doors, they mounted together, with pistol cases and flasks of brandy only for baggage, and took the dreary way for Bladensburg.

At that date, in the spring of the year, the Baltimore road was a miry wagon track, leading through almost unbroken woods of scrub and pine. There were some vestiges of fires and burnt timber, where the troops had passed over it in 1814, but, except a hut or two in the clearing, and once or twice a stage or a peddler's team laboring by, they passed nothing of interest. From cheerful inquiry the talk fell to monosyllables, and at last to silence, as they approached the appointed place. Finally the carriage stopped in a depression of the road, and the trio dismounted. They saw, on the rise of ground a little way beyond, Captain Elliot standing, cloaked, and he nodded his head to Bainbridge's salutation. Decatur descended alone by a little worn path, trodden of former duellists into the seclusion of the place, and there he stood upon the moist grass, with the small stream trickling down, completely hidden from the passing travel. A little amphitheatre it was, with the stream opening an archway in either end through the intermixed boughs and evergreens, and here had the game of deadly chance established its altar, in the infant years of the Federal Government. Convenient to a tavern, near the boundary of conflicting sovereignties, the ground nearly level, retired, these accidents had made this pretty brook drink blood, and this solitude echo to groans of pain. Directly Bainbridge and Hambleton returned and they conferred together upon the precise spot to be measured, with low voices and with more embarrassed countenances every moment.

The carriage, meantime, had turned into the woods near by. When Elliot arrived at Bladensburg, little knots of boys and men, knowing or guessing the matter impending, gave him interested regard. A group of naval officers, particularly, standing at the tavern, walked out across the bridge toward the place of meeting, and concealed themselves within hearing





of pistol shots. Almost every one of them was a friend of Decatur, and among them were Commodores Rodgers and Porter, his two colleagues in the Board of Navy Commissioners. Barron followed soon afterward, walking between his second, Elliot, and his friend, Latimer. His face expressed dignity and resolution. He walked firmly, and they three also descended into the Valley of Chance.

Decatur and Barron bowed to each other formally. Hambleton stood by Decatur, Latimer by Barron. Bainbridge and Elliot conferred together, and the former, who had behaved fairly and equitably throughout, was appointed to measure the ground. He marked a line in the sod with his boot, and, placing his toe to it, stepped out eight times, a yard to a step, marking also the last step as a base. Four times a man's length, or across your dining-room, that was the distance.

Each second now produced the pistols from a pair of cases, long-barreled dueling weapons, of fine finish and bright steel, silver mounted. They were charged and rammed in the old style, and presented to each principal by his second. During all this time no word was said except by the seconds.

In like manner Elliot and Bainbridge tossed for corners. Bainbridge won; it was Decatur's usual good luck.

"Commodore Decatur," said Bainbridge, "which stand do you select?"

The axis of the two bases ran nearly north and south, obliquely from the brook. Decatur walked to the north, nearest the water, where he stood a few inches lower than Barron. Both threw off their cloaks and stood confronting each other.

No man so beautiful as Decatur ever stood in the presence of such unmeritorious death. He was little above the medium height, but his proportions and carriage gave him the look of lofty stature. His waist was slender, and his shoulders broad and strong, with sinewy arms dependent therefrom to match the round and yet lithe form of his legs and thighs. He stood very easily straight, and his head was tall and columnar and very erect, covered with black and curling hair, and straight



side-whiskers of the same color. His nose was Grecian—large and fitted to fine, spirited nostrils; his mouth was exquisitely curved, and his lips were red. Under his black, arching eyebrows lay those large lustrous eyes which were so famed for their lightnings in excitement, but now were merely grave and positive. He was clad in citizen's clothes, cut in close-fitting naval fashion, and his attitude and confidence were well calculated to disturb his opponents.

Barron was older, graver, a little gray, and showing less chivalrously, a little bent, a trifle weary, no such study for a picture as Decatur, and wearing in his resoluteness also a relenting sadness. But he faced the occasion; and it was his first appearance, it is said, in such inglorious lists.

"Gentlemen," said Bainbridge, raising his voice "I shall give the word quickly and as follows; *Present—one—two—three*. You are neither at your peril to fire before the word *one*, nor after the word *three*."

Commodore Barron turned his head, his pistol hanging at his side, and said to Commodore Bainbridge:

"Have you any objection, sir, to pronouncing the words in the manner you intend to give them?"

"None," said Bainbridge, and he repeated the formula precisely as he afterward gave it. For the first time the antagonists looked into each other's eyes. Sternness and the purpose to kill lay in both.

"I hope, sir," said Barron, "that when we meet in another world we shall be better friends than we have been in this."

"I have never been your enemy, sir!" exclaimed Decatur.

Here Bainbridge walked behind Decatur and took place twelve or fifteen feet to his left. Hambleton as far on his right. The same positions were reversed by Elliot and Latimer.

"Gentlemen," said Bainbridge, "make ready."

The antagonists swung round sidewise, and looked at each other across their right shoulders.

"Present—"





The two arms went up and each took sight.

"One—two—"

One report rang out. The last word was deafened by it. On the word two, both pistols had been simultaneously discharged. There were two puffs of smoke and in an instant Barron was down, groaning.

Decatur straightened up a moment, pinched his lips, dropped his pistol, and the color went out of his face. He drew his right hand to his side. Then he fell to the ground, speechless.

The seconds of both were beside them instantly. Decatur was raised by his friends and moved to higher ground, near by Barron.

He opened his eyes, directly, and said:

"I am mortally wounded; at least I believe so, and I wish I had fallen in the service of my country."

Barron looked up to them all, and said: "Everything has been conducted in the most honorable manner. I am mortally wounded. Commodore Decatur, I forgive you from the bottom of my heart."

Immediately down the pathway to the Valley of Chance came many gentlemen, all friends of Decatur—Rodgers, and Porter, and Bolton, two doctors, Bailey Washington, and Trevitt, General Harper, and others, friends or idlers.

There were anxious looks, and utterances of "tut! tut!" or, "dear! dear!"

The doctors proceeded to loosen the clothes of the sufferers and ascertain the nature of their wounds. The little green valley at the breakfast hour had become a surgeon's hospital. In it were represented nearly all the naval victories of the Republic—Tripoli and Algiers, Lake Erie and both oceans; they held solemn congress in this unholy amphitheatre.

Barron was struck in the hip and about the groin. Decatur had caught the ball on his hip, and it had glanced upward into his abdomen, severing the large blood vessels there. The two doctors exchanged glances; there was no hope for Decatur; his pulsation had almost ceased.



Now began on the ground, as they lay upon cloaks spread for them, that dying interview of mingled tenderness and recrimination which Wirt has compared to the last intercourse of Hamlet and Laertes. Each striving to clear up his fame, and prove that this crime was a mistake or the work of officious enemies. Barron, certain that his hours were numbered, wished to be at peace with his enemy, that they might enter the Court of Judgment friends. Decatur was less relenting, but he consented to forgive Barron, though not his advisers.

It was a sadder scene than Nelson, Decatur's admirer, dying in the cockpit during the battle, or Bayard, to whom he had been compared, bleeding on the battle-field.

The carriage came, and they bore Decatur to it, Bainbridge kissing his cheek. He had wrested Bainbridge from the dungeons of the Moors. Bainbridge in return had measured the ground for him to stain it with his blood.

Rodgers took Decatur's head upon his shoulders, the doctor, Trevitt, seated with them, and the carriage took its painful way back to the city. Bainbridge and Hambleton hastened to the navy yard, where the tug lay to carry them back to the Columbus, that ship of discord. At half-past ten o'clock Decatur re-entered his elegant mansion, his wife and household disturbed at the breakfast table with the appalling news, and they were driven to the upper part of the house. Around the city the evil news spread. Friends crowded round the door, and into the duelist's dying chamber. He signed his will, refused to have the ball extracted from his wound, and spoke affectionately of his wife, whom he yet refused to see. Excruciating pains came to him. After one of the spasms, he said:

"I did not believe it possible for a person to endure so much pain as I feel."

The town was aroused, and his doorways and pavements crowded. They stopped the drawing-room at President Monroe's. Uncomplaining, in the midst of anguish, to the last, the unconquerable soul of the "Bayard of the Seas" yielded itself up without a groan at half-past ten o'clock in the night.





Next day the little old *National Intelligencer* came out with a leaded editorial head, saying that it would be "affectation" to be silent upon the fact that the duel had occurred, and that the combatants were mortally wounded. In a "postscript," it related that Decatur was dead, and added in the crude apostrophe of that period: "Mourn, Columbia! for one of thy brightest stars is set!" Three days afterward the mail was robbed, three miles from Baltimore, the driver tied to a tree and shot dead, and the mail bags picked over in the bushes near by. All this while Decatur's body was going from his residence, close by the White House, to "Kalorama," an estate on a hill overlooking Georgetown, and while Barron lay in the city, writhing in pain, and listening to the funeral drums. In Congress, John Randolph offered consolatory resolutions, but they were objected to. The tone of the press, commenting on the duel, was respectful both to the living and the dead antagonist, but as sternly denunciatory of "the code" as our newspapers now-a-days could be. I have looked over the newspaper files of that time, and find that while the "gentlemen" of that day were more cautious than now, the rest of society were rude and wild. Runaway negroes and fighting cocks were advertised. About the large vital occurrences there was awe-struck mention in the newspapers. The mail coach seldom left its tavern or entered the woods or the darkness, but all hands were disengaged for expected robbers. It was much the same sort of time in America as the era of Jonathan Wild and highwaymen in England.

Barron suffered dreadfully for many months, but recovered at last, and lived down to the year 1851, surviving, I think, Decatur's childless widow, who was represented in 1846 to be alive in the Georgetown Catholic College, "in ill health and poverty, finding in the consolation of religion alone alleviation of her sorrows," but hopeful of securing something from Congress.\* Barron went to sea again, and had charge of

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\* Stephen Decatur was an attendant upon the Protestant Episcopal Church, although his family predilections were Presbyterian. He left at



several vessels, but the shadow of the duel lay across his life. People forgot the apology for it in the catastrophe of it. A new generation of boys rose up who read of Decatur's valor, and learned to regard Barron as his assassin. The poor living victim could not explain against a dead man. He asked for a court-martial on Decatur's charge against him, and was exonerated with niggard compliments.

Decatur lies buried behind St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia, in a venerable and spacious graveyard, under an eagle-capped monument. His portrait is in Georgetown College. His name is conferred on many towns and counties of this country. What he lived for he has obtained—glory in the eyes of his countrymen. Barron obtained "satisfaction"—little more. Yet, I think that the latter was throughout the aggrieved spirit, and that Decatur never fought nor assisted at a duel where the provocation was so ungenerous as that which he gave Barron. Decatur was gallant and popular; Barron was sick and disgraced. Decatur had the heart of the nation.

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his death what was presumed to be a fair estate for his widow, considering that he had no children. In the settlement and sale of this estate Mrs. Decatur was reduced to an annuity of about \$600 a year. About 1828 she became a convert to the Catholic Church, and maintained until her death an intimate association with the Jesuit clergy at Georgetown. Her close acquaintance with the Carroll family is thought to have brought about this accomplishment. For several years she rented a frame house on the brow of a hill 50 or 100 yards from the Georgetown College, the house being the property of Miss Hobbs. In this house she died, about 1860, and is buried within pistol shot of its roof. A small marble cross above the grave says:

"Sacred to the memory of Susan Decatur, wife of the late Commodore Stephen Decatur, U. S. N., who departed this life June 21, 1860."

A light iron railing surrounds the lot. Father Corley, of the Jesuit brotherhood, who came to Georgetown in 1826, told me he had often walked and talked with Mrs. Decatur, and that she imputed the duel in which her husband engaged to Commodore Bainbridge. Decatur, she said, had no desire to fight Barron, but Bainbridge was resolved to have the encounter. Amongst the *souvenirs* of Georgetown College is the portrait of Decatur by Gilbert Stuart, his ivory chess-board and chess men, and his jeweled tooth-pick box.





a lovely wife, a happy home ashore, and any ship he wanted at sea. All that Barron had which Decatur had not was a higher peg in rank. Barron had nothing but this poor empty peg, and the suspicious reader cannot be able to evade the belief that Decatur wanted it. The correspondence between them embraces about a dozen letters, and was begun and finished by Barron. Decatur's letters are taunting; Barron's are pleading. The moral onus of the duel is on Decatur; for, although he was the challenged party, he tempted the challenge. Barron had not been distinguished in dueling, like Decatur. He was near-sighted. He had people to bewail his loss, and Decatur was childless. Yet Decatur, the better shot, choosing his own place, distance, and position, died by the "code" he had accepted, and on "the field" he had so frequently tempted. Barron has little posthumous mention made of him in any book of biography or passing paper. Persecuted by his wound to the end of his life, the victim of misfortune, and the victor in a lottery of murder, he demonstrates how hard it is to be a duelist and live, and Decatur how hard it is to be a duelist and die..



## CHAPTER XXV.

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### SOME OF THE ABLEST MEN OF AFFAIRS OF THE PERIOD.

"Who are really great men in our government?"

I shall answer this question by setting in a row, without much regard to association, some of the striking people I have sketched in the past five years at Washington.

And first, that great protector of the civil government and maker of war, Stanton, whose funeral I attended at Oak Hill Cemetery.

He had no political purposes to follow the war, no party to organize, nothing to consider but the gigantic fact that he was the responsible agent of half a million of men bearing up in the bloody field the fortunes of forty millions, and the cause of mankind. He was ridden down not only by multitudes of thieves, but by loitering officers, politicians seeking preferments and commissions for their constituents, by tens of thousands of men and women wishing to go through the lines to visit their sons and brothers, and many of them, in the littleness of their responsibility and the greatness of their private sacrifices, were in that frame of mind to be quickly wounded at a refusal. It was in that period that the State possessed a man who above all others had the power to refuse, and the energy to say "No."

I was once in his office when it was crowded with people of all sorts, all seeking something, or listening for some fancied purpose or piece of information, and this was his way of disposing of them:





"What do you want?" to a woman.

"I want a pass to see me husband in Camp Stanton."

"You can't go. Next!"

"I want permission to copy the papers in the Smith court-martial?"

"What for?"

"To make an appeal."

"Come again to-morrow. I'll think about it!"

"But—"

"Come to-morrow. (In a high key), Pass on! Next!"

"I want a pass to City Point, to find the body of my son."

"Let me see your letter of recommendation!"

"Yes! You will have it. Stand aside there! What are you doing here?" (To an officer with a star on his shoulder—a General).

"Why, Mr. Secretary, I thought I'd look in—"

"Go to your brigade! If I find you in this District within six hours I'll put you in the Carroll Prison amongst the common deserters. Go! Next man."

The next man puts up a paper, and says, sententiously.

"I want that!"

"That you shall have. Orderly, take him to General Townsend. Next!"

And so the endless levee went on, aggregated by all manner of episodes; and in the whole terrific revolution, in the agitated and tottering republic, there seemed to be but one man aware that there was war in the land, earnest and bloody war, to be grappled with, driven back, and brought to an end. The President jested, the Secretary of State gave dinners, the Secretary of the Treasury had ambition, the Secretary of the Interior was for himself. Stanton was the one man forever alive to the fact that bloody rebellion was to be gashed, stabbed, fought, humiliated, and, if need be, made a dreadful spectacle of retribution.

One day in the rain and mud, without music, with grave silence, with what of the Government remained to follow, the

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last mould which encased the terrible patriot was carried from his habitation in life to his grave, on the acclivities of Georgetown. There is nothing beautiful in funerals, but the grief of the bereaved, and yet here is all that is decorous to death,—flowers, tears, soldiers, Senators, Generals, the President. The face of the dead was closed to mere inquisitiveness, and the real friends looked the last in an upper chamber. The procession included the Judges, amongst whom he could have been seated. It would have been a beautiful thing, perhaps, to have seen this broken Jove mellow into a hoary Justice; but nature was wiser, and as he stood at the footstool of the Bench, ready to go up and be at rest, she slew him in the vestibule, like a soldier, and piled his mighty record upon him for a monument.

Next let us take a look at Thaddeus Stevens whose funeral I attended also at Lancaster city. Of him the Hon. John D. Baldwin said to me one day:

“Gath, I am one of those rare men who cannot make Stevens a great man. What is the matter with me?”

“You don’t go to the theatre enough, Mr. Baldwin. A good theatrical education is necessary to appreciate the dramatic situations of Mr. Stevens.”

“That must be it,” he said. “I always supposed that a statesman had vivid views of policy, and succeeded in impressing them upon legislation. Mr. Stevens was never able, with his exalted position, to reconcile the House to his Reconstruction plan. Time and again he brought it up, and it grew feebler every day. That was worse than any statesman’s failure! His financial views were so far away that no eulogist has been bold enough to refer to them. His inattention to business was one of the worst examples set by our public men. Stevens, it seems to me, had genius, but he was adapted entirely for opposition—not to take occasion by the hand and establish, with a victorious party at his back, principles and views which should succeed an era of revolution, with an era of statesmanship.”

“Time will measure him up cubically right.”





"Certainly it will! After this party and the next one goes down, Stevens will take his permanent rank for what he was alone."

"Mr. Baldwin," said I, further, "you have referred to Mr. Stevens' inattention. Is not that the gate through which swindlers come into Congress?"

"Yes, sir! Few members at that time have ever fallen under suspicion of dishonesty; but the loose way of doing business characteristic of the majority of Committees grows with the extent of the business; at last some clerk becomes advised and influential, and to him the detail work is left; then the enemy gets the password, and in the end it is impossible for a member to catch up with all that he has neglected. My impression is that if the work of Congress were well done by Congressmen these shames would cease. Easy good nature is also the enemy of pure legislation. Saying 'yes,' frequently, the member is at last the daily prey of the lobbyist."

Some time in 1869, I visited Providence Hospital in Washington: one of several institutions which receives a subsidy from Congress, and which is a more worthily sustained and well managed concern than the Government Insane Asylum, and entering the parlor I saw among some prints of saints and the Virgin, a fine steel portrait of Thaddeus Stevens.

"How came you to place this face here?" I said to the sister; "are you not a heretic, to your politics at least?"

"Why! he was our greatest friend; he got our appropriation for us. We think very dear of his memory."

There was something of the Church Gallican or the Church Universal in this. These quiet and dutiful *Sœurs* hold the Pope also to be a good old man, cheated and abused, but they had neither knowledge of the political questions involved in the big and useless council held at the time, nor sympathy with the prelates who will go there to support them. This Providence Hospital is managed with much economy. Some time ago the one cow which gives milk to all the patients broke through the covering of an old well, and was not found for a whole day. Suddenly Sister Catharine ran in, much excited, and cried:



"Pray, Sisters, pray for the cow down the well, while I run for help."

They all fell to praying in the hardest way, while the little woman brought some workmen, who rigged a derrick and wound up the maternal font of the hospital. If a politician had had charge of that hospital, he would have dug a new well and charged a new cow to Congress.

From Stevens let us turn to a brilliant debater,—Carl Schurz:

Schurz resided in 1871 in a pleasant dwelling on F street, between the War Department and the Potomac, in a roomy and semi-secluded house. His children were at school in Europe.

His library is his favorite place of sojourn, and when he can be induced, which is seldom, to speak of his German adventures, his tall, strong, robust figure, and half-Mephistophilian face, take all the interest of romance. When he came to America, in 1852, he could scarcely speak a sentence of English; now he is an orator in the same language. He was a student at Bonn when the revolution of '48 broke out, and then he became a Lieutenant in the patriot army, and served till the capture of Rastadt, when he retired to France. His old bosom friend and Professor having been captured and put in a dungeon near Berlin, Schurz disguised himself and rescued him, and the two set sail in a boat of twenty tons burden from Rosstock, on the Baltic, to Edinburgh, Scotland. After a stormy passage they arrived at Leith, the port of Edinburgh, on Sunday, and dressed in their strange German costume, and unable to say any English words but *bifsteck* and *sherry*, they wandered about, pursued by crowds of little boys. Toward night, worn out, with a Calvinistic Sunday, they went into a hotel, and were obliged to poke their forefingers in their mouths to indicate hunger. The waiter, after a long while, appeared with a huge bowl, and poking his forefinger into it, said, with great energy, "Ox-tail-soup!" Schurz stayed a week in London, then resided two years in Paris, and finally sailed for New York, a married man.

Schurz is the ablest running debater in Congress, and he





possesses the conscientiousness and dignity which we miss so generally in public life. His domestic life is sweet and affectionate, and he possesses traits too gentle and honorable always to give him the advantage in the unscrupulous encounters of American legislation.

Walking up the Avenue with Carl Schurz in the spring of 1873, I asked him if we might not take some comfort in America from the official corruptions of other countries.

He said that in Prussia, there was a good deal of fraud committed under the cover of joint stock companies, but that the government service was honest. In France, there had been corruptions in the army, particularly in the conscription account, under the empire. He did not think, however, that corruption in any degree comparative to the extent in which we had it in America was to be found anywhere in Europe, unless in Russia.

Some days after this, I met an American Inspector of our Consulates in foreign lands, who had but recently returned to Washington. He said that everywhere in Western Europe, amongst social acquaintances, he was the subject of inquiry and talk on the matter of corruption in the American official service; that he steadily debated the imputation, although knowing that much of it was unanswerable; but that, since he has returned home, he is satisfied that we have the most corrupt class of legislators and executive officers in the world, not excepting Russia, where, despite the increasing evils of generations of despotism, there is still enough force at the head of affairs to make terrible examples at certain times of speculators, and, between this fear and the growing civilization of the country, the Russian officials bid fair to be reformed sooner than our own.

From Schurz let us turn to his great predecessor from Missouri.

Colonel Thomas H. Benton, the principal projector of the Pacific Railway, whose statue stands in St. Louis to-day, looking westward along the line, aquiline and grim as in life, with



his cloak folded around him. I have obtained some personal reminiscences of him, one or two of which may be pertinent to the theme of this chapter.

Shillington is an Irish-bookseller here, of credit and renown at Washington. Benton was a neighbor and friend of his, and made Shillington cut out of books and newspapers every conceivable article upon the Pacific Railway and bring it to him. He also employed Shillington to select from the Congressional Globes, which were brought to his house in C street by the cart-load, the matter that he wished in publishing his Abridgement of the Debates of Congress.

"It was a strange and remarkable study," said Shillington, "to see that old man lying there flat on his back, unable to rise, his spectacles poised on the tip of his nose, looking through the long debates, whose huge folios he held on his breast. He knew that he had but a week or two to live, and he was running a race with death to get the book finished; for he believed that it was the vital thing to keep the country together. He used to send me word four or five times a day to come up there, and the people said that I was his servant. If I did not come promptly on time, the old gentleman seemed to feel that I was in some way derelict in my duty to the country.

One day, when the shop was full of people, word came down, 'Mr. Benton wants you to come up at 2 o'clock, to help him on an important matter.' As soon as I could possibly leave I went around to his dwelling, and found him asleep, breathing very hard, with a large volume of the Globe on his breast. I lifted the book off, and set it on a table a little out of reach. Then, seeing that he did not yet awaken, I hastened back to my work. In about two hours I returned, and the old man looked very severely at me.

"I sent for you, sir, two hours ago. I have but a month, at most, to live, sir, and it is important for the country that this book shall be finished before I die. You did not come, sir."

"Yes! Mr. Benton, I did, and I found you asleep."





"I have not slept for fifty hours, sir! It was impossible that I could sleep, sir, with so much on my mind!"

"Benton never trusted a man that told him a lie, so I found it necessary to clear myself.

"Mr. Benton," said I, "you were asleep, with a volume of the Globe on your breast, when I entered the room, and I found you breathing hard, so I put the book on the table yonder."

"The old man's eyes lighted up.

"Well now, sir, he said, 'I knew I had that book on my breast, or on the bed somewhere, and I wondered how it got off there so far. Perhaps I did doze a little unconsciously. But come, sir, we must get to work, I have but a little time to do a great deal of work in.'

"When Benton was about to die, so vital did he think his advice was to the country, he sent for Buchanan, had the door closed, and solemnly devoted his last hours to impressing upon the President his opinion of the mode in which the country should be administered. If ever there was a man," concluded Shillington, "who thought that in his mind and reason lay the true destiny of the Union, it was Tom Benton. His family, his fame, his future were all subordinate to the love of country."

A brilliant man, of evil habits, in his day, was James A. McDougall, of California, who died in 1867. He has left many anecdotes of himself at Washington, where he is regarded as the fallen angel, the superb ruin, a sweetly melancholy portrait out of Decadence, like those carousing Romans painted by Couture. His desultory learning was remarkable; so was the tenacity of his memory, the stronger when his brain was most aflame, and he used to quote from the Greek and Latin poets by the page, steadying himself, meantime, a poor old sot in body, while his luminous intellect kept the bar-rooms in a thrill.

There is a restaurant near the Capitol where they still show McDougall's dog, a milk-white mongrel, with the fawning



habits left in which it was humored by its master. Like his memory, it is most vivid and familiar with bar-keepers and tavern loiterers, and they say with some vanity :

"Knows tha' dorg?"

"No!"

"That's Senator McDougall's favo-rite purp!"

McDougall used to feign great knowledge of the small sword; and an Irishman or Scotchman was in Washington during the war, giving officers fencing lessons. One day McDougall dared him to a combat with canes. They crossed a while, and he, half drunk, gave the master a violent "dab" on the side of the ear that nearly knocked him down.

The swordsman said to McDougall :

"That was foul. Now I'm going to clean you out."

"Don't you touch that man," cried a vagrant Irishman, loitering near, who had heard, perhaps, through the tavern windows some of the drunken Senator's didactics : "that man's a good Dimmicitic Senator, and a great gaynius. If you hit him I'll mash your nose."

So the wayward steps of the poor lost old man were upheld by invisible attendants, extorted to his service by the charm and command of his talents ; for when drunkest he was most arrogantly oracular, and did all the talking himself.

They recall, who have ever heard them, Saulsbury and McDougall together, the latter defining in a wild, illustrated, poetic way, the word government, law, or sovereign, pouring upon it the wealth of his vagrant readings, making a mere definition gorgeous by his endowments of color, light, and sentiment. Then Saulsbury, shutting one eye to see him fairly, would say with ludicrous pity :

"McDougall, you're the brightest intellect in the American Senate!"

Clutching Saulsbury with the grasp of a vise, and speaking to him in a tone of solemn warning, McDougall would retort :

"You, sir, would be the brightest intellect if you would study!"





At this Saulsbury, in a maudlin way, falls to weeping, and McDougall, imagining himself called upon in this case to utter a mild reproach, would construct a garment of sanctity for himself:

"I burn the lamp early and late," said McDougall. "The rising sun sees me up already, laboring with the muse of Homer. [Sob from Saulsbury.] I reach down the Koran at sunrise, and read myself a sublime lesson, pilfered, it is true, from the benignant Brahma, but little altered except in the vernacular. At eight o'clock, like Socrates, I breakfast upon a fig and a cake of oatmeal. Wine never crosses these lips. Till ten o'clock I roam in my gardens, communing with the mighty master of the Saducees." [Sob from Saulsbury.]

Enter the bar-keepers with the drinks, and the airy castle dissolves.

The wild things done by McDougall would make a comedy fit for Farquhar. His entire mileage and pay he spent—taking little note of his family—making altogether about twelve thousand dollars a year. He died in Albany, near his birth-place, a victim to his temperament; for he had no grain of practical executive tact, and his poetic nature made him both the stature and the wreck he was. The fire that made him brilliant, made him also ashes.

No sketch of men of mark at Washington would be complete without Charles Sumner. He has resided for several years in a pleasant new residence at the corner of H street and Vermont Avenue. His dwelling below stairs is a pair of salons tastefully and copiously filled with busts, engravings, books, and articles of *virtuoso*.

Thus far many visitors have penetrated into this senatorial labyrinth, but fewer have had opportunities to estimate the pleasantness of his dinners, enlivened and made cheerful by a host who long ago accepted the English mode of living—to save the day for stint and work, and to resign the evening to good cheer.

On the second floor, in one very large and nearly square



apartment, lighted by windows on two sides, Mr. Sumner has his work table, and here again methodized, yet with such infinite multiplication, that the eye at first sees only confusion, are the implements of his unfinished tasks in manuscript, note-books, and all the paraphernalia of intellectual productiveness.

Mr. Sumner sits at a large table, a drop-light bringing into clear, yet soft relief, his large, imposing stature, strong face, great wave of hair, a little grizzled, and encased in his dressing-gown and slippers he looks like Forrest's delineation of Richelieu sitting in his library between the hours of state, recreating at play-writing.

Our estimate of public men is too often narrow, harsh, and based upon little angularities which scandal-talking people take up and magnify, until at last they seem to comprehend the whole character of the man. In this way our conceptions of the leaders of opinion have come to be destroyed, and we acquire the habit of resolving our hero into his manner, or we gauge his life by some current anecdote.

It has been said of Mr. Sumner that he has not a patient temper, that he is uncompromising, and that he is impracticable. The second of these distinctions does him honor, for although an uncompromising man, he is never disturbed except upon leading questions, and after twenty years in the Senate he is still heard to debate at rare times, and is always heard with the keenest interest by all.

Not a particle of his life has been wasted; he is uncompromising in the breach when the main assault is to be made, but in the camp he is modest and agreeable as a priest. As to his want of practicability, the progress of the nation of which he has been the ideal leader in its better elements for twenty years, disproves the shallow assumption. His life has been without a great mistake, but his successes have all been large, real, and abiding. Since he left Harvard College in 1830, he has passed the gamut of all the practical workshops through which a Senator should go to his accomplishments; at the age of twenty-two he took charge of the "American Jurist," and





edited it with the keen eye of a natural lawyer. While pursuing successfully his legal practice in Boston, between the ages of twenty-three and twenty-six, he was the reporter of the United States Circuit Court, and teacher at the Cambridge Law School, and the editor of several books on admiralty and practice. He became a marked man in that discriminating, educated community, as one of the future ornaments of the Commonwealth, and in 1837 he went abroad, and enjoyed the confidence of the best and most experienced in public life. Returning in 1840, he edited "Vesey's Reports," in twenty volumes, and thenceforward for eleven years, until his election, at one bound, from private life to the United States Senate, Mr. Sumner was the *beau ideal* of the State as an orator and young leader of the civilization around him. His life has not, therefore, been cramped and corrupted in the purlieus of State legislatures, nor manipulated by the small proprietors of caucuses, nor did he come to the Senate hemmed around with promises to a host of lackeys and parasites; he rose direct from a private citizen of Massachusetts to be her Senator in place of Webster, and at the age of forty.

The people of Washington have known more or less of Mr. Sumner for twenty-one years. In that time our municipal life has experienced many shocks, and the ground appears to have given way under our feet; but on the whole there is probably no one conviction clearer than this: that Mr. Sumner has steadily risen through the bitter repugnance, and the social obtuseness of old Washington sentiment, until we ourselves acquit him to-day as probably the greatest character we have yet seen from the North. The terrible enemy of what has passed away, but always the earnest friend of the Capital city, its edifices, its adornments,—never factious, never in any sense a demagogue, never suspected even by the most scandalous of being other than a pure man in all his relations to his country—what he is to us he appears in tenfold stronger light to the people of his native section, who also know him from boyhood up.



Few men in Washington by hook or crook have kept such a general run of notoriety and influence as General Butler of Massachusetts. This man who seized the Relay House, crept like a panther and at a spring into Baltimore, sent a rebel woman to a torrid island, held the trenches before Richmond, flung a couple of iron mines into Fort Fisher, made New York shudder, and himself one of the most debateable names in our military history, I saw stand one Monday, without uniform, before the Court of Impeachment, to open the case of the People against President Johnson."

A singular presence was his,—short, broad-shouldered, short-legged, fat, without much neck, but with a good many flaps around the throat, standing as if a trifle bow-legged, and with no suggestion of a military habit and life, rather of sedentary occupations which had encouraged the sagacities and resentments—say, indeed, a politician! A curious natural crescent of a forehead, sweeping round from ear to ear, was developed by baldness into a great cranium of a shining pink color, in which the folds of the brain revealed themselves with a naked, muscular appearance. Too naked, indeed, was the man's head, to give the lookers-on in the galleries a comfortable feeling. But for the red tint of his baldness he looked cold.

Now, this man's face, instead of looking straight forward, was compelled to point its chin upwards when it wanted to see anything<sup>e</sup> ahead, because one of its eyelids was in a condition of permanent suspension. He peeped under it as, under a green shade, you often see some acquaintance of yours level his eye along the surface of his cheek. By sympathy with this eye, the other eye also hung fire a little, and it is needless to say that persons of this sort are very seldom handsome. Never forgetting this half-closed eyelid, therefore, you must further imagine the rest of the face to be of an audacious, not to say pugnacious, cast and expression. The ears, the eyebrows, the broad cheek bones, the contour of the chin are without delicacy, salient, but not massive. He seems forever thinking up some keen, scathing utterance. The sides of the bald head





have some thick wings of dark hair hanging to them like the feathered wings of a fowl, else plucked. This man wears a good, new coat of black cloth, to match the rest of his dress. Your first feeling as you see him is, that if he were a school-master you would mind your lesson; if he were a bank president you would hate to ask him for a discount. Because he looks as if he would just as lief refuse as consent, and would probably refuse in terms calculated to make a man feel very uncomfortable. In short, Mr. Butler is a man that you perhaps wish to have nothing of business to do with at all. He would bully you; he would also conquer you. He would rather impress you with a sense of his power, than his magnanimity.

As to his talents, he need be at no pains to impress you with it; for you admit the same without challenge. A good, strong, suspicious, measuring, worldly look is all over his face. Over the eyebrows the forehead is raised into bumps, as you always see it in men quick at words. Little inertia has he, seeming always poised for a leap. A reflection is always folded under that large, flat, eyelid. Masses of men, whether audiences, mobs, supplicants, legislatures, or juries, affright him never, having always perfect confidence in himself and never-daunted courage. Waiting to address this court and the great and brilliant historic audience, you see him sit at his counsellor's table with the roll of his speech, without a contraction of the throat, a cough, a look of modesty, an attempt at composure—without anything but a set audacity of self-reliance, a wish to get up and go on, a contemptuous impatience for the fight.

This is the remarkable man—remarkable always, whether with the majority or minority—who, without much appeal to original principles, or any considerable sacrifice to great motives, has carved for his own person a stature of the first prominence in the history of these eight years of violence. His life has been already written by the most fascinating of our biographers, and the influence of his will upon the country and its enemies, has been impressive and decided.



General Butler is one of those men who, reared, so to speak, at the criminal bar, have never had any material reverence for the law, more than a sharp-shooter for his rifle. The law has been to him a weapon, not a master. His appeals have never been addressed to the old Doctors of the Law, seeking their reason rather than their weakness. The world in which he has striven for fame has been a miscellaneous jury. He has informed himself upon the motives and credences of human nature, and made the object of all his endeavors, not to convince but to win. In military affairs, as in legal, he has paid little attention to the comity of nations, the laws of war, or military precedents. To astonish, to awe, to conquer, have been his aspirations. And probably no man in this country ever appealed so successfully to the personal fears of men. Baltimore, New Orleans, and New York, alike felt the terror of his presence. He made himself as awful to the gold gamblers of Wall Street and the secession girls and wives of New Orleans, as to armed rioters and disaffected and treacherous cities. Discarding all the magnanimities, he was as keen to detect as to punish the minutest infractions of loyalty, even when expressed by looks, by absence, or by silence. In like manner he was always alert for short cuts to great military ends, as in the canals of the James and Mississippi, and the powder ship of Fort Fisher. He has never had his eye off General Grant, since the latter ridiculed him in his report, and he did not scruple to charge Mr. Bingham with having murdered Mrs. Surratt upon mutilated evidence, who would, probably, himself, have hanged her without any trial at all.

While Mr. Butler has thus been always in the advance where resolute acts of intimid action were required, he has seldom succeeded in the direct face of an equal enemy, after his ingenious expedients and "short-cut" surprises had failed. He was the first either to apprehend or to imitate the spirit of slavery, which is about the same thing in its consequence, and the terror of his name paralyzed the arms of assassins who had sworn to have his life. He went back to Massachusetts after





the war, and with the same determination to win, invaded a neighboring Congressional District, pitched his tent upon a common until he had obtained citizenship, and then swept away all competition by the audacity of his canvass, fairly driving the baser lot of politicians to support him by the supposed terror of his influence.

Here in Washington he is surrounded with almost a full company of adherents. They bring him news, search out records and authorities for him, do copying and errand-running, carry threats and inducements, and in short, increase his power, by virtue of that law which Ben Wade quoted the other day: "The more you kick a breed of hounds, the more they cling to you!"

Never in a Republic, has one man succeeded in making himself so terrible. Appealing always to the instinct of fear, he has thus far succeeded beyond the power of talents, of social influence, of wealth, or of popularity, in putting himself at the head of every assault. His talent lies in his perception, his language, and his audacity. Few men have like fluency and conciseness of expression. Take some examples; What is stronger than his denomination of an insolent woman: "She shall be treated as a common woman of the town, plying her vocation!"

Of Johnson: "He was thrown to the surface by the whirlpool of civil war!"

Of the Dred Scott decision: "Time has not yet laid its softening and correcting hand long enough upon this decision to allow me further to comment upon it in this presence."

His method is as wonderful. He has more Congressional business brought to him from outside parties and from all parts of the country, than any other five men in Congress. All this is carefully classified and recorded, to be referred to at a moment's notice, and some of his speeches are the work, in detail, of probably twenty or thirty men, each carting up some fact or inference, while he, like a confident architect, puts it together and hews it into shape.

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